

78 Quarterly

Photo by Fred Ramsey, Jr.



No. 1
& 2

Silver Anniversary Reissue
\$10

78 Quarterly



What
made
Jordan
great?



King
Solomon
Hill—
WHO
is he?

Early Jordan



What
does
he
say
about
Tom-
my
John-
son?



How many copies
of this?—See the
Rare Records
section...and the
auctions!



This strange label sold by mail
—but no ads can be found...!



For 35 years he
was only known
to collectors as
"Skillet Dick"



The truth about
Charley Patton's
MURDER!

Volume One, No. 1; Autumn, 1967

\$1.65

Front cover photo by Fred Ramsey, Jr.:
(Alabama—66 miles out of Birmingham, on Route 31 to Montgomery)

*(Silver
Anniversary
Issue)*



We invite you to participate
in this 25-year celebration of
non-stop deluxe publishing
with our meaty reprint of
Issues no. 1 and no. 2

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78 Quarterly, Inc.



LETTERS to the editor

the greatest Ever since the demise of *The Record Changer*, circa 1958, all you guys have been bringing out one noxious jazz publication after another. They last a few issues then fold. I mean, what's the purpose of all this egotistic nonsense? What happens if I take out a year's subscription? Incidentally, this makes the fifth so-called magazine I subscribe to, just to make sure I don't miss any auctions. When is it going to end? When are you going to end? I don't mind spending money on rare records. I do mind spending it on magazines that are unreadable—F. Karr, New York, N.Y. **front rank** Music unlike children, should be heard and not seen. Krist, you hothouse flower's bring out another **FRONT LINE** issue...Can't you just listen to the music? You ruin it by writing about it. Johnny Dodds was inarticulate. Does this mean anything to you? If it doesn't, then I can't explain it. Music is meant to be played or heard, not read, or read about. **3-year subscription** Late in '57, I took out a three-year subscription to *The Record Changer*. However, I have heard nothing since then. I wrote at the time, asking if my subscription had expired and received no answer. It has been about ten years, and I just thought I would voice my opinion about it and about the sad state of jazz in general—L.V. Squires, Paxton, Maine. **youthful** I can only speak for myself of course. However, it seems obvious to me there is something terribly wrong with the current folk-blues scene. My quarrel is not so much with the current R & B or country blues reissues (god knows, I'm not one to knock Charlie Patton). My complaint is with the listeners and imitators...with the hairsute, unwashed bodies of today's **YOUTH** (who, I suspect, are in some way reacting against today's TV deodorant commercials). My distaste for these self-satisfied, fetish-worshipping slobs, who so obviously know where they are going (nowhere), is unlimited. By infolk-blues rubbish in your magazine, you put yourself in their company—you have done jazz a great disservice. Transforming the nostalgic saga of the 1920's into a ponderous bore will take some doing, and I'm confident **78 QUARTERLY** will bring it off—T. Groz, Wildflower, Kansas **literary quality** Wouldn't it be better to confine your endeavors to a literary folio—clearly designated as such? Why muddy up the blues-jazz field with the sort of excrement one finds on the intellectual pasture? I am an admirer of the Hemingway direct action approach to literary writing. And, as such, I will use direct methods to see that 78

QUARTERLY discontinues publication—L. Gunn, Lodi, N.J. **black patti, gennett, superior and paramount** As the wife of an avid jazz record collector, I would like to express my sympathies to other wives of avid record collectors. Ladies and wives: much of your budget allowance is being used to buy scratchy-sounding music on such bizarre labels as Black Patti, Gennett, Superior, and Paramount. I have been married only six months and, for the good of my marriage, I made a significant decision: during my husband's recent sales trip to Chicago for his manufacturing firm, I removed the source of difficulty...I made several trips to our charcoal cookout behind the house...melting them down into a viscous liquid. After one hour's time, I found that the material was firm yet sticky. By evening, it had reverted to a hard, brittle substance that was dark in color and of ponderous mass—shaped in the form of an imperfect globe. The globe's two outer diameters measure six and eight feet, respectively; the total weight is an estimated 950 pounds. My husband is due to return from his sales' conference in two days, and I would give a fortune to see the expression on his face. However, I have scheduled passage on the *Bremerhaven* to visit relatives in Europe—Mrs. T. Groz, Wildflower, Kansas **a wealth of material** I recently came into an inheritance of well over \$3,000,000 through the death of an aunt. Naturally, I am looking for interesting ways to invest a portion of this sum. As part of my investment program, I am exploring methods of purchasing rare records, which I understand, have shown a high net/gross ratio rise—higher than either stamps or coins. Of course, I need reassurance that the overall median will continue its present upward spiral, and that the current prices are not the result of manipulation by two or three individuals—and that values reflect sound growth, rather than acquisitiveness. For complex reasons, which I am not at liberty to divulge, I have been unable to deposit the original sum directly into the bank for conversion to negotiables. However, I am holding the amount in its original form (i.e., 50's, 100's and up). I will provide certain serial numbers of smaller denominations upon request. Includes water-mark, red-thread, rag-pulp stock; 3 colors: 2 greens & black, and fine-line steel engraving from 28 percent camera reduction—T. Follingsworth III, North Shore, L.I., N.Y. **the big break** I'd like to know what kind of blues-jazz magazine is it, that doesn't even give a whisper to Charlie Mingus or Ornette Coleman? The all-too-current 'white folks' blues fetish is apparently once again blind to the subtleties of the expression of outrage by cooled-off Americans. Instead, you look through a microscope and see your own personal message in rural Southern blues. It is not your culture or era. You were blind to the country blues for 100 years. Now, 30 years after it all ended, you are no longer blind. Will it be another 30 years before you give Mingus and Coleman that 'Big Break' in **78 Quarterly**?

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RECORDS

By ROBERT TRAVIS

Two excellent reissues get the MILESTONE label off to an enviable start. Ma Rainey is featured on MILESTONE 2001 and Johnny Dodds on 2002. All titles are drawn from John Steiner's historic PARAMOUNT catalog. The Rainey titles are all new to lp and the Dodds are unobtainable in the U.S.

Ma and Johnny are served well in another way too. For the first time excellent dubbing and filtering have cut the inevitable PARAMOUNT surface noise well below the signal. Congratulations to Messrs Steiner, Keepnews, and Haggerty for a Paramount first—comparative fidelity! Rechanneling for stereo, John?

Ma Rainey's 1924-'27 records are well known and need no critique from me. Chances are if you don't know about them you will like them—and this lp is a big break if you do. Her moving, gutty moaning and wry bitching come through with diction that is comparatively understandable. Titles are: "Jealous Hearted Blues, Cell Bound Blues, Army Camp Harmony Blues, Explain' The Blues, Night Time Blues, Memphis Bound Blues, Slave To The Blues, Bessemer Bound Blues, Slow Driving Moan, Gone Daddy Blues".

The fine Dodds sides all cleaned up and reissued here were all made with various slap-dash, swinging South Side groups circa 1925-'27. The resulting free-wheeling blues style suited Dodds much better than the rhythmic confines of the Hot Five and Seven. Some of his most expressive work is included here.

Included too is fine biting trumpet by Tommy Ladnier and, oddly, two sides with Joe Smith all the way from New York.

A point of discographic delicacy is raised by the lp that should be mentioned, and dismissed. Dodds' presence is questionable on the first three Lovie Austin sides. When asked, Mr. Keepnews said "Everybody in the world thinks they are Dodds except Martin Williams. He says they are Jimmy O'Bryant." Me too, but decide for yourself. One way or the other they are quite exciting records.

I would suggest that for those of us with rigid minds it would be nice when possible to keep original recording dates together, rather than scattering them in the

hopes of boosting sales. That policy was carried to ridiculous lengths by Riverside, and now, Columbia and Mainstream. For instance, it would be nice to have all four Dixieland Thumpers together. Titles: "Rampart Street Blues, Don't Shake It No more, Too Sweet For Words, Jackass Blues, Frog Tongue Stomp (Lovie Austin), C.C. Pill Blues (Blind Blake), Oriental Man (Dixieland Thumpers), Steal Away (Paramount Pickers), Oh Daddy (Dodds & Parham), Lonesome Blues, Long Distance Blues (Ida Cox), Messin' Around No. 2 (Jimmy Blythe's Ragamuffins)."

Robert Shaw, a primitive Texas blues piano player, leads off Mack McCormick's new label, ALMANAC (number 10).

Shaw is mainstream, barrel-house. He is the last playing survivor of a clutch of such blues players that worked mainly through south central Texas in the 20s and 30s.

Robert Cooper and Alex Moore come to mind as related players who are known to records, but Shaw does not resemble them very closely.

To me, Shaw sounds more Chicago, but not copied Chicago. I hear strong elements of Cripple Clarence ("The Ma Grinder"), Montana Taylor ("Whores is Funky"), Will Ezell and Al Ammons ("Here I come With My Dirty Dirty Duckins On) and more.

Like the others, Shaw's style is highly rhythmic, unpredictable and even erratic. Fortunately for us, he does not seem to have played much during the late 30s and 40s and to have picked up the newer styles. Nevertheless, his vigorous playing indicates that he is not far out of his prime. All in all, a moving and satisfying artist that projects the delights of the low life. Recording is wholly satisfactory.

As expected, Mack McCormick backs up the record with an illuminating treatise on Shaw, the "Santa Fe" group, and Texas piano in general. One interesting point made is that the "fast western" style that has been written about repeatedly in East is unknown to the players on the spot.

Response to this record determines whether ALMANAC will grow or die. I, for one, hope for future issues as satisfying as this one.

ALMANAC RECORDS, Mack McCormick, Box 13383, Houston 19, Texas.

Now REALLY "eccentric" piano can be heard on VANGUARD 9219/79219, "Skip James/Today." Two piano tracks add to guitar accompanied blues to make this one of the best—and for me, the best blues record.

Really exceptional recording and somewhat more lively performances give the VANGUARD the lead over MELODIAN 7321 "Skip James, Greatest of the Delta Blues Singers", an outstanding record in its own right.

It is tragic that the drive has gone out of the country blues boom just when an artist with the sensitivity and talent of James has shown that he still masters his old material and, more important, is going on with new things. There seems to be no place for him now and the loss is ours as well as his.

The tunes on both records are mostly familiar to James fans. "How Long" and "All Night Long" on the VANGUARD are exciting piano performances (How about a Skip James piano lp?). The lovely blues melody, "Black Gal" used successfully by Leroy Carr and Clarence Williams and then forgotten reappears here as "My Gal," and on the Robert Shaw record as "Black Gal."

Note: "Mississippi John Hurt/Today", VANGUARD 9220/70220 was issued with the James and is a fitting monument to that great singer who died in late 1966.

Jabbo was selected by Brunswick Records in 1929 to front a band that the company hoped would compete with Louis Armstrong and his Okeh Records. Sidemen included Laurence Buford, Cassino Simpson, Ike Robinson and Omer Simeon (fresh from a stint with Jelly Roll). All 19 sides issued in 1929 are included here.

At the time the records sold hardly at all and consequently are so rare that the jazz fans have had little opportunity to hear them. It is easy to speculate that they were more sophisticated than the market could bear in the 20s.

Certainly, Jabbo went beyond Louis after thoroughly assimilating the style. His virtuoso performances cut Red Allen and often forshadow many other trumpeters, particularly Roy Eldridge.

Jabbo's moods on the records range widely from the hot, stabbing solo on "Jazz Battle", the complex work on "Boston Scuffle" to the lyrical "Tanguay Blues" and "Sleepy Time Blues."

Dick Spottswood was probably disconcerted when Jabbo told him (Jabbo lives in Milwaukee) that he did not play on the Lloyd Smith and Alex Hill sides planned for inclusion in the lps. Dick wisely went ahead and put them in anyway because they are pertinent to jazz of the place, time and style.



The most important reissue set to appear in several years is the two-record set, "Jabbo Smith" on MELODIAN 7326/7327. Most of these sides have never been reissued in any form and document a very neglected trumpet giant.

All tracks are excellently dubbed from virtually noise free 78s, a decided plus that we do not get very often.

I think that every traditional jazz fan, whether his taste end at 1929 or start at 1930 will be glad he has these.



?

SAM COLLINS? SAM
BUTLER? BIG JOE
WILLIAMS? RAMBLIN'
THOMAS? WILLIE
JAMES? B.L. JEFFERSON?

KING SOLOMON HILL — by GAYLE WARDLOW

**IN 78 QUARTERLY'S
LEAD ARTICLE,
GAYLE WARDLOW
INTERVIEWS KING
SOLOMON HILL'S
WIFE...REVEALS
HILL'S STARTLING
TRUE IDENTITY...
WHERE HE'S FROM...
WHO HE PLAYED WITH!**

WHERE Northern Louisiana is a barren country with few inhabitants, an abundance of red clay soil, and miles and miles of commercial timber bulging out from the valleys which lie between sparsely populated sawmill towns that subsist on the pulpwood industries.

Sibley, Louisiana, some 30 miles from Shreveport, and five miles below Minden, is a town of some 500 residents. Two railroads cross just outside the city limits--the Louisiana and Arkansas and the Illinois Central.

An old man in his late seventies sat on the porch of an old, unpainted brown shack which was reeling from the erosions of time and from lack of upkeep.

With an air of expectancy I asked, '...ever hear of a young blues singer named King Solomon Hill? He used to live around this area and he sang a song about the Gone Dead Train, and about Tell Me Baby, What fault You Find In Me?'

The old man searched his memory with a senile expression; but with a friendly smile, replied, 'Don't remember no Solomon Hill, but I had a cousin named Joe Holmes who used to sing all them songs you mentioned.'

Thirty minutes later I began my conversation with Holmes's wife, a gentle woman who for 31 years had lived with one of the most incredible mysteries in the history of the country blues. A three-day-search in five different towns began to pay off.



Big Joe Williams (photo from 1930's) was not King Solomon Hill...

Joe Holmes, alias King Solomon Hill (the name was probably given to him by Paramount's recording director, Arthur Laibley), was a native south Mississippi. He was born near McComb in 1897.

Following Charlie Holmes, an older brother by ten years, Joe came to northern Louisiana in 1915, where, three years later, he married Roberta Allums. Their only child, Essie (who now lives in Chicago), was born in the winter of 1918.

Joe soon grew restless in Louisiana and in 1920 returned to McComb with his wife and child. In Bugarland, the colored section of north McComb, he met its most famous blues singer, Sam Collins. On one of the few occasions Roberta Holmes went out with her husband, an unflagging party-goer, she saw him accompany Sam Collins at a juke joint. She can still recognize the likeness of Collins which appeared with an ad for one of his Black Patti recordings.



Collins' Gennett masters came out on a variety of Gennett-family labels including Black Patti



Holmes' (Hill's) wife, Roberta, recognized this drawing of Collins (from a Black Patti ad)

The family remained together in McComb for 12 months. Then Roberta and Essie went back to their home in Sibley. Joe stayed an extra six months, just playing music and doing as little work as possible.

In later years, Holmes was known for a song that began, 'Going to Shreveport, tell the chief police.' This may have been his version of Collins' Jailhouse Blues on Gennett 6167.



Sam Collins, a one-time singing partner from McComb, Miss., had already recorded for Gennett by 1927.

While traveling by train to Texas in 1928, the legendary Blind Lemon Jefferson made a brief stop at Minden. Shortly thereafter, Joe and a close friend who lived near Minden, George Young, left on an Illinois Central passenger train for Wichita Falls, a favorite hangout of Lemon's in Texas.

Lemon Jefferson, fat, and a slovenly dresser, always carried a pearl-handled .45 pistol, just as he later did in the Mississippi Delta where he used Ishman Bracey as a guide and travelling companion.

Two months later, Holmes and Jefferson parted company. After making the rounds of various Texas towns and road stops, Joe and his friend George returned to Sibley to play in the barrelhouses and jukes of Northern Louisiana.

An aftermath of Lemon's trip through Minden may have been the 1928 Paramount session which marked the debut of Willard (Ramblin') Thomas, a blues singer who probably hailed from West Texas or Arizona. It seems possible that Paramount contacted Thomas on Jefferson's recommendation.



A rare, early photograph of Willard (Ramblin') Thomas who played with Holmes in Shreveport and Sibley and Roytown, Louisiana

Joe Holmes (King Solomon Hill) often travelled to Shreveport to play with Thomas, who later moved just north of that town, and who was to travel through many parts of Texas and Louisiana. Roberta remembers that 'Joe had rather play with Thomas than with any other singer.' Next to George Young, Thomas was Holmes' best friend.

When Thomas came to Sibley, he and Joe went down in the clay hill valley area that was mentioned on WHOOPEE BLUES: 'I got to go to that valley, there ain't a house for 25 miles around.' They played in the small sawmill settlement of Roytown, performing at a jukehouse that was closed by the law in the late 1930's after two people were killed there in a single night.

In early 1932, a scout for Paramount Records found Joe singing in uptown Minden and asked him if he wanted to record. Joe went home and asked Roberta what she thought about the opportunity.

She told him, 'Go where you wanna go.' Holmes did exactly that, although Roberta remembers that he was not too excited about the then forthcoming trip to Wisconsin.

The scout in question, probably Art Laibley (soon to be the subject of a separate article by this author, who was able to locate him several months ago), accompanied Joe to Birmingham, where the two were joined by Ben Curry. Curry, an old friend of Joe's, was originally from Arcadia, Louisiana, where Holmes sometimes appeared in the 1930's.



Ben Curry, a mandolin player from Arcadia, Louisiana, was an old friend of Joe's. On this record are Ben Curry, mandolin, Joe Holmes (King Solomon Hill), harmonica, and Marshall Owens, guitar. Owens was from Alabama.

These two singers, along with the Alabama bluesman Marshall Owens and the Famous Blues Jay Singers of Birmingham, then travelled to Paramount's Grafton studios.

The quartet opened the recording session with two sides, followed by Curry's five, one of which featured both Joe's own harmonica playing and Owens' guitar. On all of his own sides, Curry used his mandolin, the instrument he played with the greatest proficiency.

Owens, then a man in his late fifties or early sixties, recorded four sides, two of which have never been located by a record collector. His TEXAS BLUES, b/w TRY ME ONE MORE TIME (released on Paramount 13117), is a classic example of an early style of blues that evolved into the southern Alabama blues style. Although Owens' music has many qualities in common with Texas blues, his singing style is highly reminiscent of Ed Bell's.

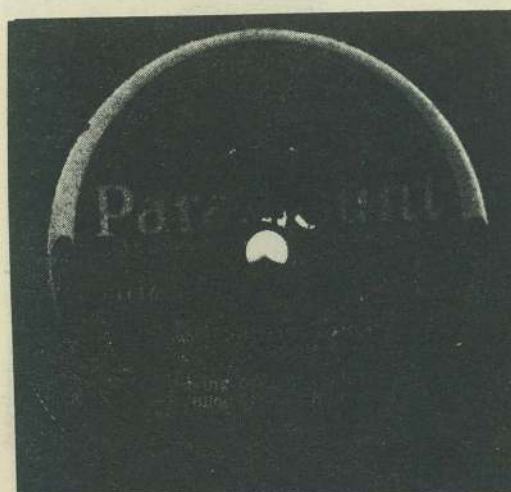


The second rarest Paramount is probably 13129. The rarest—My Buddy Blind Papa Lemon/Times Has Done Got Out Of Hand on Paramount 13125—still hasn't been found.

Holmes was the last to record: six songs, all of which Roberta said he had been performing before his trip to Grafton. One, the GONE DEAD TRAIN, was one of the best train blues of the 1930's. Using the Pseudonym, for some undetermined reason, 'King Solomon Hill,' he told of his experiences hoboing and hustling on the Southern railroad (which runs from New Orleans to New York via Birmingham), and on the Illinois Central (which runs through Sibley). On GONE DEAD TRAIN, Hill also alluded to the town of Fryburg, which consists of but a store and a post office ten miles south of Sibley.

The flip side of that record, released on Paramount 13129, was a version of the old Memphis Minnie and Joe McCoy duet, WHAT FAULT YOU FIND IN ME.

His lyrics for his other two recorded numbers, DOWN ON MY BENDED KNEE and WHOOPEE BLUES (Paramount 13116), express the attitude of the macho, a stance not unlike that taken by Robert Johnson and Isaiah Nettles.



The rare first master of King Solomon Hill's Whoopie Blues (sung without falsetto) appears on late 13100 series



Although it never turned up on Paramount, the second master of Whoopie Blues does appear on the obscure Crown label of the 1930's



The second master reappears on Eli Oberstein's oddly pseudonymed Varsity label

courtesy of Bernard Klatzko

The two songs which completed that session have never been located by a collector. One of them MY BUDDY BLIND PAPA LEMON, was written as a tribute to Lemon, with whom Holmes played on at least three occasions during Jefferson's stop-overs in Minden.

The other missing song, TIMES HAS DONE GOT OUT OF HAND, was a typical 'hard times' depression piece.

On all of his extant pieces, Hill used a cow bone for chording, in the mode of Sam Collins' blues.

Joe brought copies of all three records back to Sibley with him, but all have been destroyed. Holmes returned with Ben Curry, and both men, along with the unrecorded George Young, made a trip to Texas to publicize their recent recordings. Few copies of any single Holmes effort were sold, how-

ever; few people around Sibley even knew that Joe made records, because they were released under an assumed name.

Joe continued to travel in the 1930's to nearby Shreveport and Monroe, as well as on to eastern Texas. He also spent time in small towns like Choudrant, Ringold, and Jonesboro. Roberta remembers that 'He went up in Arkansas to play and people would come from Eris and Calhoun and other towns to get him to play after they heard tell about him.'

A sawmill worker at Heflin, a small town south of Sibley, saw Holmes get off a train from Longview one night after he had been playing out in Texas.

'Funniest sight I ever see'd: that guy didn't stay in town 30 minutes before he got in an argument with this other guy in this joint. That other guy just pulled out his pistol and shot at him three times. He didn't stop running until he was clear out of town. Just left his baggage and guitar layin' down there on the floor.' His belongings were eventually retrieved by another friend.

By the late 1940's, Holmes was drinking more and more, but was still playing music. He never attended church; his wife recounts that 'Joe just kept right on, just like he was going straight to the devil.'

In 1949, Holmes took sick. Roberta said, 'He never went to no doctor. Take sick; laid around about three days--then he died. Been drinking before he died and he started bleeding inside. Had a hemorrhage.'

Like many other great blues singers (such as Charley Patton, Willie Brown, and Skip James), Holmes was very short. He stood only five feet and three inches. He weighed about 130 pounds, and was brown-skinned in complexion. He smoked constantly.

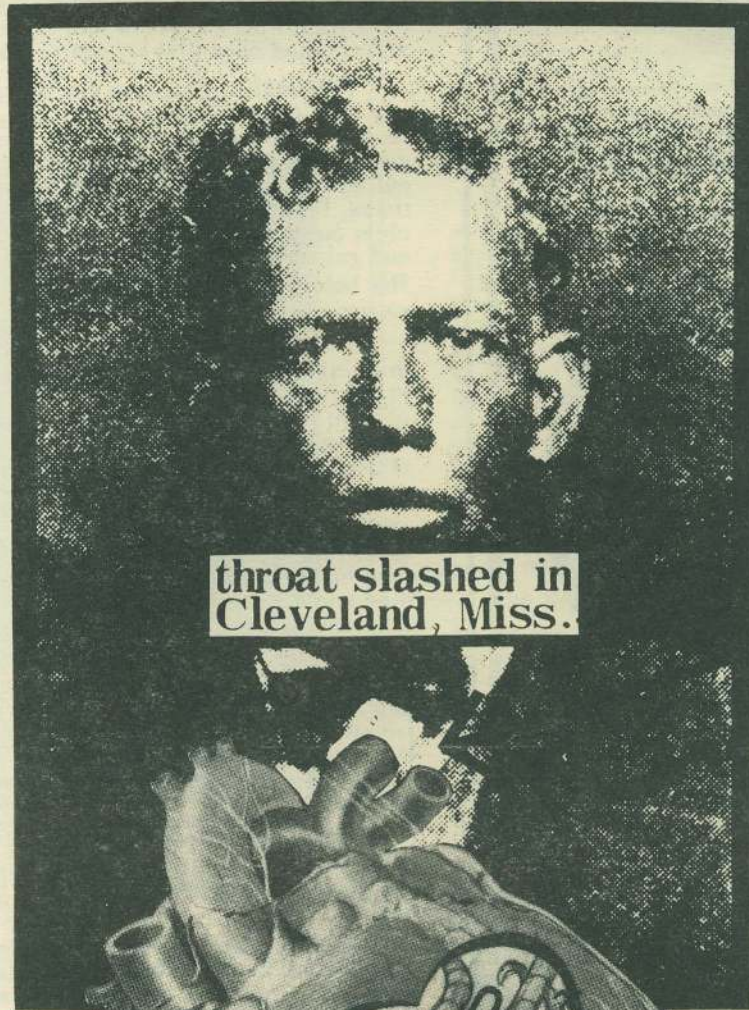
Roberta remembers two other facts, one pertaining to his musical development, the other to the tragedy that led to his death.

She said, 'He learned himself how to play, before he ever came to Sibley.' The other: 'He drank all the time. He was drinking when we married.'



Gayle Wardlow's tireless and resourceful research in the blues field has already uncovered the Victor-Paramount artist Ishman Bracey, the Paramount talent scout and troubleshooter H.C. Spiers, as well as Elder Curry and Rev. D.C. Rice on a study of research on sanctified music--and other blues artists of rural renown. He also did key behind-the-scenes research which led to the re-discoveries of Skip James, Son House, and Rube Lacey. He has written album notes for Origin Jazz Library--for OJL2,5,8, and the two sanctified albums, OJL12 & 13. In the course of his travels as a sportswriter for a Jackson newspaper, and as a record collector, he has amassed invaluable information on the history of country blues, all of which is forthcoming in a definitive book on that subject he is currently writing.

PATTON'S MURDER— whitewash? or—HOGWASH?



throat slashed in
Cleveland, Miss.



right mitral valve

left mitral valve

enlarged diaphragmatic
channel shows vessel
rupture at 3 liters
per ft/min.

by GAYLE DEAN WARDLOW
and JACQUES ROCHE

(Since its inception, gnawing doubts have plagued 78's editorial staff regarding the suppression of a complete Patton death report. To combat a rising volume of ugly whispers concerning Patton's untimely end, and to restore shaken public confidence in the blues critic, 78 decided to appoint an 11-man fact-finding commission to search out and destroy the sources of the said whispers. However, we were unable to find 11 distinguished fact-finders in the blues field! Then, by a serendipitous stroke of luck, 78's own Jacques Roche offered to 'defoliate' the Delta in pursuit of the still-hidden truth. 'I'll make 'em talk!' Roche is reported to have said.

Naturally, 78 was hesitant to unleash its big punch before holding an intensive review of the deteriorating situation at hand. Editor Whelan, anxious to see the project terminated but cringing from an easy solution to the problem, described his position as the 'lonliest one in the world.'

Meanwhile, an eager Roche added fuel to the flames as he characteristically began (to rave): 'It could just be that Patton's KILLER—and I use that word advisedly! Yes, LET us think about the unthinkable!—is having a glass of Lowenbrau in some Argentinian dive at this very moment. If so, I'd like to join him.'

At the eleventh hour, Gayle Wardlow, who had been ardously compiling a Patton biography in Mississippi, orbited his long-awaited letter. We thought this would ground the zealous Roche, who in turn had begun stockpiling other information to close the missive gap ('I see the killer,' he wrote, 'He is tall, boyish, AFRAID...!'). Instead, Roche decided to add his findings to Wardlow's on-the-spot research. 'With Gayle's death certificate in hand,' Roche writes, 'I consulted with my doctor on Patton's medical history. The doctor was absolutely essential to the success of the project: I'd had this abrasion at the joint of my wrist which made it uncomfortable for me to shake hands with him. I had to hold my hand in a rigid position while doing so—it was unbearable! But everything turned out just fine. I talked about my problems and he told me about his...' The consummation of this tete-a-tete, however, must go unreported, as it is currently being thrashed out in Mrs. Roche's divorce suit.)

CHARLEY PATTON how? where? when did he die? After 33 years —the truth...in all its shocking CLINICAL DETAIL!

by Gayle Dean Wardlow
and Jacques Roche—

One of the most peculiar aspects of blues research is the frequent encounters with conflicting and even preposterous death stories concerning a well-known blues singer. For reasons to be explained later, such an aura of mystery tends to surround the deaths or disappearances of certain singers that the features of their actual lives become eclipsed in the minds of both the public at large and singers' own contemporaries. In some cases, particularly that of Bessie Smith (who died, according to her last manager, not dramatically on the doorstep of a segregated hospital, but during a car collision), the myth is bound up in cultural iconology; in more obscure ones, like that of Charley Patton, the intrigue mushrooms only as one approaches direct sources of biographical information.

The presence of the Bessie Smith style of rumour, and its easy public acceptance, is no mystery. The 'education' of the blues public has served only to create the false impression that blues singing represents a stance against

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and Jacques Roche. All rights
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the 'ubiquitous presence of death' within a putative 'redneck jungle', or is a form of living death itself. Given these alternatives, the singer's art is basically his resignation to an imposed spiritual death. Thus, the essence of the blues is to be found in lines like 'There's a hellhound on my trail', which is seen as Negro dialect for: 'I give the blues to Mister Charley, but; I'm more culturally-deprived than Mister Jimmy (Baldwin), so I have to be more poetic in so doing.' One who trades on the above-mentioned premises, such as James Baldwin himself or Paul Oliver, may even arrive at the conclusion that, since the blues singer lived an ugly life, poetic conclusion requires his beautiful death. Thus, the 'lynching' of James (Boodle-it) Wiggins, for example, is reported by Oliver not as a sensationalist episode created by a rumour-monger (Big Bill Broonzy), but as stark fact.



photo courtesy of Laurence Cohn and Frank Driggs

One of the last photos of Bessie Smith—taken shortly before her death in 1937...

Regarding the mysterious death of Charley Patton, less hysterical blues research can bare hysterical rumours in terms of their broad cultural function. The Patton researcher instead confronts a credibility gap from the outset which works two ways: rumours of both violent and natural death are equally suspect. This is due to the fact that legends of Patton's violent death did not spread far beyond the confines of rural Negro society. Whatever function such stories did serve must be limited to that culture which was developed by and once daily supported the cotton economy of the flat Mississippi Delta.

As of this writing, no one has come forth from the Delta with a Broonzy-like claim of 'telling it the way it was' in regards to Patton. This fact has only mitigated Delta circulation of the death-by-violence rumours. As Skip James, who in Mississippi 30 years ago frequently encountered

rumours concerning the violent deaths of both Patton and himself, put it: "A lot of people may say a lot of things about Charley's death, and a lot of 'em weren't with him when he died, either: that much you can bet on."

In May of 1963, Jim Edwards, when interviewed in his native Cleveland (a small town some 30 miles south of Clarksdale, Miss.), stated that Patton died from heart trouble in 1934 in the town of Longswitch, near Leland.

Two months later, one of Patton's many wives, Minnie Franklin Washington, remarked that although she had heard that Patton died in 1934 of natural causes following a prolonged illness, she strongly suspected that he had drank himself to death.

Both Edwards and Mrs. Washington were correct in one statement, that being that Patton died in 1934.

In July, 1963, Bernard Klatzko and Gayle Wardlow were told in tiny Holly Ridge that Patton died there and not in Longswitch, which, though a mere mile away, no longer even existed on any Mississippi map. It was then 'established' that Patton died in a house across from Tom Robinson's store (the only one in Holly Ridge) immediately after returning from a recording trip to New York—probably in late February or March of 1934. A grave site, which they were not allowed to inspect, added credence to these statements. 'An elderly Negro woman, who guarded Charley's 'bones' as though they were Shakespeare's, was less interested in the interment of her misleading testimony.'

Later, Mr. Wardlow was told independently that Patton died from a slit throat, having bled to death in the aftermath of the butcher-knife attack inflicted by a woman with whom he was then living.

The story of a cutting, which did actually take place (in Cleveland around 1930, shortly after Patton's arrival there from Will Dockery's plantation nearby), was widely repeated throughout the Delta, and ultimately reached Chicago. There, in a small club, Howlin' Wolf, recounted the story to Mr. Klatzko in the presence of other former acquaintances of the late singer.

This story was, in effect, repeated by Booker Washington White on an album recorded for Takoma wherein White, in his typical breezy manner, implied that Patton had been knifed and killed by a 'sandfoot' (or 'no-good', barrelhousing woman).

Since Patton wore an ugly, wicked scar across the side of his throat, it is easy to guess where this rumour originated. Yet, actual members of Patton's family, by verifying a knifing episode, have implicitly discredited the idea that it proved to be fatal. Another Delta rumour, however, held that Patton was knifed twice. Thus the presence of Patton's wound was explained in a way that did not besmirch its allegedly fatal effects.

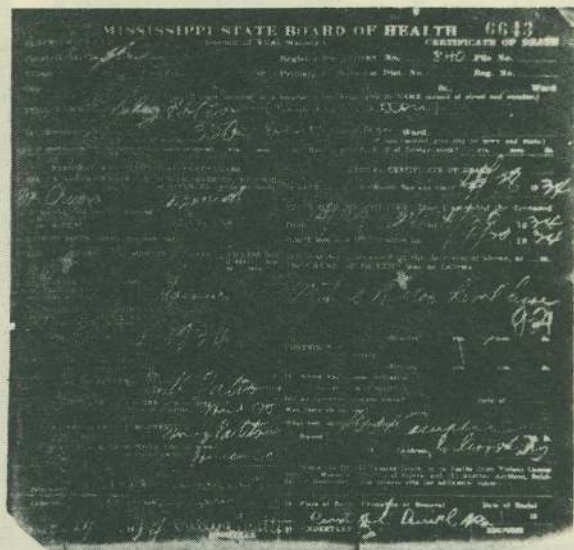
The process of zeroing in on Patton's few intimates has otherwise served only to bring old legends to light. One friend, a steady companion of Patton and Willie Brown for three years, heard that Patton was struck and instantly killed by a lightning bolt. This rumour may

have been a projection of the wishes or prophecies of zealous church-goers who literally believed that God would strike down those who followed the devil in singing 'his' blues.

Though not an atheist, Patton, who was sometimes castigated by his father for his blues-singing, tended to dramatize his failure to find meaning in religious gestures. On *Screamin' And Hollerin' The Blues*, he borrowed a Biblical description of praying for this purpose:

If I woke up in the mornin',
I jinx all around your bed
Turned my face to the wall and I,
Didn't have a word to say.

From all appearances, Patton used *Elder Green* as a vehicle for attributing to the clergy—with some justice—all of the vices which made the blues singer unacceptable to the latter. Yes, through his own penchant for preaching without credentials, Patton called flagrant attention to himself as a *poseur* of the Elder Green ilk and thus made the 'lightning bolt' rumour possible. Such fancied retribution was scrupulously avoided by Patton's cohort, Brown, who in fear of divinely-guided bolts would not even perform a spiritual.



THE CHARLEY PATTON DEATH CERTIFICATE
—found by Gayle Wardlow in 1966...

The explanatory telegram Son House (who often performed with Patton during his last five years of life) received from Patton's averred widow stated that Patton died from the mumps: the living author of the death message asserted that he succumbed to a heart attack.

Finally, as this accompanying death certificate demonstrates, the true facts can be reconstructed—assuming that the state of Mississippi was ever in possession of them as imparted by on-the-scene and presumably reliable donors.

According to his attending physician, whose handwriting is difficult to transcribe, Patton died a mitral valve case. Both Mr. Klatzko and Mr. Wardlow were told as much, along with the (now substantiated) fact that Patton had visited a doctor as late as the week before his death.

A number of interesting and even confusing biographical points are suggested by the jumbled notations of the nurse (who, following convention, probably drew it up and presented it to the physician for strictly medical certification) which will hereupon be decoded and recapitulated in full. Patton died in Sunflower County on the 28th of April, 1934, and not in February as had been supposed. At the time of his death, he was living at 350 Heathman Street in the Negro sector of Indianola, a town some ten miles from Holly Ridge and some 30 from the banks of the Mississippi. This structure, in which Patton undoubtedly died, no longer stands.

Surprisingly, Patton's age at death is given as 44, indicating a birthdate of 1890 or 1889 (from May onwards). Previously, it was thought that Patton had been born in 1887 because his sister, Viola Cannon of Cleveland, and a former wife (Minnie Franklin Washington), had concurred on that figure.

16 DATE OF DEATH (Month, day and year) 4/28

17. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended the deceased from 4/17, 1934, to 4/20, 1934, that I last saw him alive on 4/20, 1934, and that death occurred on the date stated above, at Indianola, Miss. The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:

Mitral Valve trouble

(duration) 7 yrs. 1 mo. 13 days

CONTRIBUTOR (Secondary) Willie Calvin

(duration) 7 yrs. 1 mo. 13 days

18 Where was case contracted Indianola, Miss.

Date of death and actual cause of death...

The new date probably came from Patton himself. Since the name of the informant, Willie Calvin, was entered in the handwriting of the registrar (one Dollie Trotter) on the day after Patton's death, the witness in question would seem to have collaborated on early-acquired information. Although an informant for a death certificate is usually a relative, spouse, or close friend of the deceased, the name 'Willie Calvin' had never been encountered in the course of extensive research on Patton. Since the informant no longer lives in the vicinity of Indianola, and left no relatives or forwarding address behind, the possibility still remains that the birthdate for Patton is erroneous, for it cannot be proved that he himself supplied the data.

On the other hand, for Patton to impart a genesis of any sort to Willie Calvin would mark a departure from his general rule: while reportedly making a practice of publicizing the intimate confidences of others, he was finicky about disclosing the most ordinary of his own personal particulars. Son House could never get Patton to reveal his birthdate, which by Houses's own guess would lag some ten years behind Mississippi's figure.

Other facts, such as the listing of his birthplace (Hinds County) and that of his parents' names (Bill and Amy), square with the already-collected data. The centrally-located county of Hinds, with its seat at Jackson, was Patton's home until around 1900. Thus, an original master of the Delta sound probably did not reach that area until at least a semblance of a Delta blues style had already been created.

The certificate indicates that the registrar completed the listing of Patton's address (which was probably furnished by Willie Calvin) and respelled his name as 'Charlie'. This revision is favored today by his *Origin Jazz Library* reissuers, who have dropped the 'Charley' used on his Paramount recordings, while maintaining both the ARC-Vocalion and Gennett ledger versions. Patton himself, who could neither read nor write, spelled his first name orally as 'Charlie'.

The undertaker's name is listed as the Central Burial Association, which was a local colored funeral home. The mere fact that Patton received a formal burial virtually squelches the possibility that he met a violent death, unless one can somehow develop a 'total conspiracy' theory which would involve his undertakers as either participants or idiotic pawns in a larger scheme.

More debatable aspects concerning Patton's death arise from the certificate's most important entries. The first lies in the relationship between the cause of death and the duration of Patton's illness. Although the doctor wrote that he attended Patton from April 17-20th, he gave an oddly precise figure—92 days—to represent the duration of the fatal illness. This figure seems to have been written over an earlier notation of 13 days.

Any explanation of the discrepancy between the two dates, as well as the *raison d'être* for the final date itself, must be purely conjectural. One possibility is that the entry of '13' days, which goes back to the day before Patton originally visited the doctor, was given by Charley himself and referred to his self-detection of acute symptoms. A '92' figure, which would closely correspond to the date on which Patton's final recording session was completed, might have been written in after someone (Willie Calvin?) suggested that Patton had been feeling sick 'since he came back from New York.'

A similar misleading impression of exactness is created by the alleged cause of death, for mitral valve trouble is only a secondary cause of general heart failure and would normally be listed as such on a death certificate. In itself a sequela, a mitral valve disorder does not lend itself to a 'duration of illness' entry at all.

Although a mitral disorder would have been discernable to a doctor of Patton's generation by means of a stethoscope examination, its actual role in the death could not be stated, with finality, without an autopsy report. By the presence of other factors in Patton's appearance and medical history, however, his doctor might have accurately ruled on the seriousness of his condition and its ability to cause Patton's death. (The severity of a mitral case cannot be determined via stethoscope.)

MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
Bureau of Vital Statistics

Registration District No. **PHO 2nd St.**
or Primary Registration Dist. No. **PHO 2nd St.**

NAME **Chas. Patton** (If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give the NAME thereof)
Residence No. **350** Health Man Ward

DATE OF DEATH **4/28/34**
Place of death **Home**

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS
SEX **Male** AGE **34** SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED (write the word)
RACE **Negro** COLOR **Dark**
EDUCATION **8** (month, day and year)
OCCUPATION **Farmer**
PLACE OF BIRTH **Mississippi**
DATE OF BIRTH **4-17-34**
NAME OF FATHER **Bill Patton**
PLACE OF BIRTH OF FATHER (city or town, State or country) **Mississippi**
NAME OF MOTHER **Ansie Patton**
PLACE OF BIRTH OF MOTHER (city or town, State or country) **Mississippi**
NAME OF SPOUSE **Ansie Patton**
PLACE OF BIRTH OF SPOUSE (city or town, State or country) **Mississippi**
NAME OF CHILDREN **Willie Brown**
PLACE OF BIRTH OF CHILDREN (city or town, State or country) **Mississippi**

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
DATE OF DEATH **4/28/34**
I, **Dr. J. H. Brown**, certify that I attended the deceased from **4/27/34** to **4/28/34** and that death occurred on the date stated above, at the CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:
Heart failure
Contributory: **None**
Where was death contracted? **Home**
Was there an operation? **No**
Was there an accident? **No**
Signed: **Dr. J. H. Brown**
Place of Birth: **Mississippi**

How is Patton's first name spelled?

Place of residence

Occupation: farmer

Name of father and mother and their birthplaces...

Unless it were congenital, Patton's mitral valve defect could have been caused by either an outbreak of rheumatic fever before puberty, or by contraction of syphilis some 20 years before the appearance of heart symptoms. In the case of a Southern Negro, the chances are 99.9-.1', according to one knowledgeable doctor, that rheumatic fever would produce a heart condition of Patton's type.

Patton's mitral defect could have fallen into one of two categories which would in turn have determined the severity of his symptoms. As a mitral stenosis case (who would suffer from a contracted valve), Patton's ensuing symptoms would have been manifest over the last five years of his life. As a mitral insufficiency case (with a loose valve), these symptoms would have appeared, in an acute form, during the last three months of Patton's life. Although the severity of the symptoms would vary according to the disposition of the case, they would nonetheless have handicapped him both as a musician and as a laborer, and would have become progressively worsened in the absence of medical treatment. Given the then-prevailing aversion to doctors among rural Negroes, it is extremely unlikely that Patton, up to the last two weeks of his life, ever saw a doctor. (Son House's studied opinion was that Patton would have seen, in the event of illness, an 'Indian' or herb doctor, if any.) By the time Patton was treated in Indianola, the effects of his heart condition—such as shortness of breath, general anemia, stomach disorders, and the presence of blood in his phlegm, could easily have indicated that Patton's case had reached the terminal stage.

Confronted by such an unfavorable prognosis, the doctor in question might have seen hospitalization as useless. (At the same time, he would have seen enough evidence of a rampant heart condition to have accurately certified Patton's death.) The fact that Patton paid at least two visits to the doctor would indicate that he was instead being treated with a drug (digitalis) to make his enlarged heart work faster.

Patton's earlier heart symptoms would have been masked by the fact that he was both a heavy drinker and a chain-smoker whose physical condition could have been wrongly attributed, by both himself and his contemporaries, to his living habits. Contrary to the belief of Minnie Franklin Washington, Patton's drinking could not in itself have affected his heart condition. Despite a report that Patton ignored a doctor's advice to curtail his drunkenness (just as Willie Brown, who collapsed after a night-long drinking bout, was later to have done), alcoholism was rightly omitted as a contributing factor to his death in its official certification.

On the other hand, the fact that Patton slept or rested little during the last week of his life could have hastened his death, as well as his increasing propensity for brawling which made him notorious among his latter-day acquaintances.

If Patton's mitral condition had been of a stenosis character, his career as a blues singer would have been already impeded by the time of his first Paramount session in June of

1929. The possibility therefore exists that latter-day collectors are presently evaluating a relatively peaked Patton as an 'immortal' blues singer. (Significantly or not, Patton gasps for breath at one point on *High Water Everywhere—Part II.*) The observation of Son House, that Patton's records greatly surpassed his live performances, could conceivably be explained by his medical condition. (1)* Over the course of such performances, which according to House might extend for three hours or more, Patton was known to favor a 'lazy' vocal style (such as can be heard on *Green River Blues*) and to rely on clowning techniques as much as actual blues-playing to assuage his audience. Patton as a stenosis case could have done so to gain a respite from the exertions he would have lacked the stamina to maintain. Patton's inordinate everyday slothfulness (on which a stenosis condition could have considerable bearing) would not only have precluded a suspicious display of recurrent fatigue, but would in all events have conspired to make a languished Patton performance look perfectly natural, as indeed such a one may actually have been.

That Patton may have been a long-standing mitral is suggested by the fact that, although a gluttonous eater, his weight (in contrast to his father's and brother's) was always somewhat substandard. (Son House estimated it at 130 pounds, which would ill-cover his 5'8" frame.) He was, though not known as sickly, somewhat of a 90-pound weakling; in recounted fights with an admittedly heftier wife, he lacked the punch, though not the will, to put her away for keeps. Furthermore, Patton, of draftable age during World War I, was apparently rejected as unfit for army duty. Son House once reported that Patton himself explained this rejection on the grounds of his bad heart.

On the other hand, House saw no telling evidence of heart disease during his acquaintance with Patton. Some symptoms, which must have developed unbeknownst to House, were communicated to others who knew Patton. These, imparted to Bernard Klatzko by Bertha Lee (who accompanied him on his last recording trip), consisted of the exhaustion Patton would feel after a night's performance and the presence of pain whenever he tried to sleep on his back. The latter phenomenon is the result of poor blood circulation and is a classic symptom of heart disease. (From his less intimate view, House was able to discern that Patton never slept on his back, but would perpetually writhe and bellow in his sleep.) Neither House nor Bertha Lee knew Patton before 1929, and the latter's testimony was elicited only in connection with Patton's final stage of life. It is thus unlikely that any conclusive information in regards to his specific type of mitral disorder will ever be uncovered.

(1)* None of the foregoing is to suggest that Patton's recorded SOUND was in any way diminished by a presumably chronic heart condition. In fact, the opposite may have been the case. Patton's unpredictable vocal timing, so crucial to his appeal as an 'inspired' blues singer, could actually be seen in terms of his inability to regulate his breathing and thus to produce a fixed syncopation in the manner of other Delta singers.



Paramount spelled Patton's first name as 'Charley'

The existence of Mississippi's death certificate at once clarifies and obfuscates not only Patton's medical history, but his personal history as well. None of Patton's known wives bear initials which match are or even similar to the designation of 'W.K.' (or, possibly, 'D.K.') as his widow. The absence of Bertha Lee Pate's name as wife or even as informant on the certificate tends to bear out the persistent report that Patton, during the course of his 'marriages' was anything but monogamous. In all probability, her self-styled status as Patton's widow and witness to his death is ungrounded, particularly since Patton did not die in Holly Ridge where she had previously lived with him. On this subject, Miss Lee could, if broached, only widen the credibility gap her interview with Mr. Klatzko originally created. Her account of Charley's famous last words—'Honey, from now on you're going to have it tough'—endows him with an empathy as lover or bread-winner which was conspicuously absent from not only theirs but from all of Patton's marital relationships.

Any current speculation regarding the identity of Patton's notarized widow is necessarily open-ended: a reasonable hypothesis is that 'K' was a female relation of Willie Calvin, if not Willie 'herself'. Since the 'W.K.' entry was recorded by the nurse of Patton's physician, and that of 'Willie Calvin' entered by the registrar the next day, an original phonetic transcription of the name by the former could explain the discrepancy which exists between them.

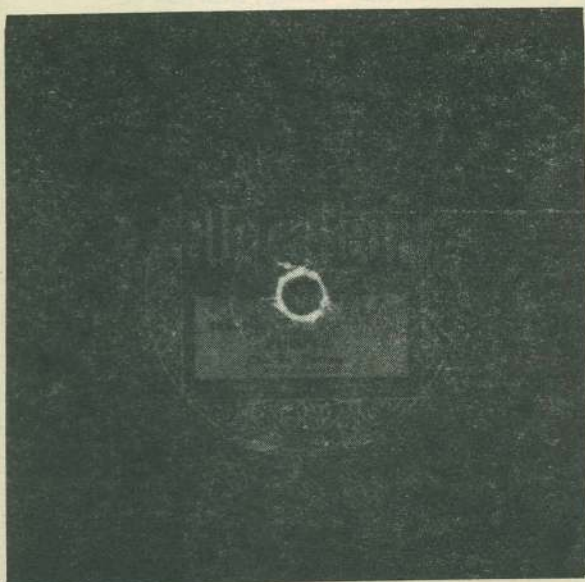
That Patton's last address was apparently given to the registrar by a Willie Calvin who lived on the same block further suggests that Patton had been boarding with the latter when he expired. By virtue of the fact that Patton had few long-standing male companions (most of whom were known to Son House, to whom the name 'Willie Calvin' meant nothing), the sex of the informant would also appear to have been female. If such were not the case, one would be at a loss to explain why the informant did not, in deference to Bertha Lee, mention her as Patton's widow or even give a Holly Ridge address for the singer.

It might be noted that a sudden disappearance from Holly Ridge (where he had lived in 1933) followed by death shortly afterwards in Indianola might account for the garbled reports concerning Patton's fate which reached the former area, as well as the persistent suspicion that a woman murdered him. For example, some Holly

Ridgers might have heard of an Indianola marriage contracted just before Patton's death—and thus found a telling connection between the two coincidental events. Others might have wondered why no local resident, besides a Bertha Lee whose quarrels with Patton had already become public knowledge, would or could claim to have seen him shortly before his unwitnessed but presumably local death.

Yet the intricacies of Patton's romantic aggrandizements cannot fully explain the still-lingering Delta rumours that he was somehow murdered. Had Patton collapsed in the arms of an hysterical wife who was heard to shout: 'Things are going to be tough from now on for me!' in full view of teary onlookers, such stories would be every bit as prevalent today. For the underlying basis of the rumours is to be found in the nature of his general romantic involvements and in their relationship to his employment status, which is noted on the Mississippi document at hand.

The fact that Patton is listed as a 'farmer' who went unemployed in 1934 (a situation used as the motif of *34 Blues*) and not as a musician indicates both the lack of social status accorded to a blues musician of Patton's era and the personal reluctance of such artists to publicize their profession. (1)* Such reluctance, however, would not indicate an inner conviction of the singer's that his music was a 'personal pastime'; the latter-day guitarist who seeks to create that impression only does so after originally creating the impression that he is a musician. (With respect to his musical prowess, Patton was described 'the most self-conceited person I ever met' by Son House.)



Vocalion (ARC) and the Gennett ledgers spell Patton's first name as 'Charlie'

* (1) Skip James, when queried on the occupation stance he might have assumed in Patton's situation, stated that a medical inquirer would have 'no good reason' to know him as a blues singer, and that he in turn would have 'no good reason' for describing himself as one.

Rather, Patton's modesty, if it could be termed as such, was probably due to the fact that many leading country blues singers derived their source of income not so much from singing as from hustling: a point which made those professions synonymous in the minds of their contemporaries.

Patton, who was said to have 'hated work like God hates sin', shared a tendency with his fellow travellers to marry, whenever possible, a cook whose earning potential, desirability to other men, and 'food supply' was always greater than that of other female wage-earners. Such singers as Patton would then become social targets not through their enviable 'catch' but through their habit of renting their cache to the nearest convenient 'monkey man'. The monkey man, so dubbed for his apish stupidity, would, in the belief that he was a singular 'love object', bestow his money on any woman who so flattered him. (Skip James: 'He's always grateful to touch the hem of a woman's garment.') In turn, these honest wages would dribble back to the blues singer. This racket exposed the singer to double jeopardy once either the euhured monkey-man (thereafter called a 'fatmouth') or the woman discovered the true nature of her relationship to the blues singer. At such a point, the betrayed woman could invoke the irate but ever-gullible monkey man, who would see 'his' woman not as a hustler herself (as would the blues singer), but as the victim of the blues singer.

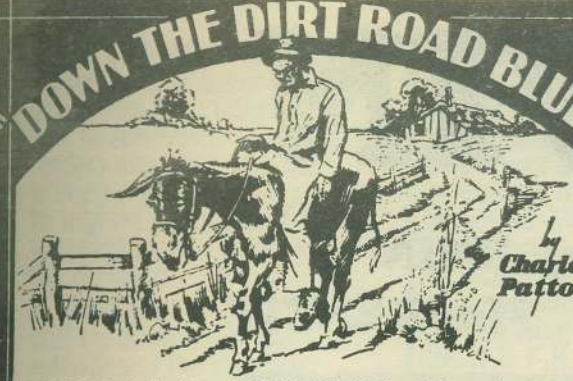
That the blues singer was seen as a social menace to other Negroes is demonstrated by Big Bill Broonzy who, in his published autobiography, significantly rails against the 'sweet papa' (short for 'sweet back-door papa' or 'sweet-backer'). Today's blues singer, while privately winking at his own fancied or actual hustling, instead sees his counterparts as oxes to slaughter for their susceptibility to a Broonzyish backlash.

Even though no blues singer is actually known to have died at the hands of a male or female avenger, none of them doubted that such victims could and did exist among their colleagues. (Certain singers, in fact, actually quit hustling or curtailed their operations in the belief that they were marked men.) This belief, which would see the dangers of death at the hands of a 'hustling woman' as a greater threat than a more abstract fear of social oppression, is reflected in a great number of blues lyrics. Patton's own tendency was always to publicize his mode of existence and to dramatize its accompanying dangers:

*Just like a rattlesnake Baby I stay, every minute in a curl
I ain't gonna have no job mama, rollin' through this world.
When I leave here mama I'm going, further down the road
So if I meet him up there I'm going back to the Gulf of Mexico.
I'm gonna shake 'glad hands' mama I say, lord of your lovin' boy
Fixin' to eat my supper in, Shelby and Glendor'.*

The first verse of the above-quoted *Rattlesnake Blues* tips off a secret source of income with its contrary premises that Patton can be both a hoarder of money (a 'rattlesnake in a curl') and a rounder who eschews work. The second and third verses show Patton alternately dodging and expressing his gratitude towards his woman's other 'boy'. Clear implication thus exists that Patton is making money from this figure's involvement with his own wife. That Patton would eat in two different towns may be an indication that he is simultaneously 'married' to two different cooks.

DOWN THE DIRT ROAD BLUES



by **Charley Patton**

HERE had a lot of trouble at home and he decided to hit the dirty, dusty trail for parts unknown. He wants to leave everything and go somewhere else, so he says this new Blues, as his very male jagger him along the old dirt road. Be sure to ask for Paramount No. 12854, at your dealer's, or send us the coupon.

[12854—Down The Dirt Road Blues and It Won't Be Long]
Charley Patton; guitar acc.
12851—Hot Lovin' and Mama Sings Out, Barrel House Five.
12852—Money Strippin' Blues and Highball's Worth of Liver Blues, Edith Johnson; piano acc.
12853—Pony Blues and Banty Rooster Blues, Charley Patton; guitar acc.
12857—Back To The Woods Blues and Good God, Charlie Bead; piano and guitar acc.
12858—Black And Evil Blues and Broadway St. Woman Blues, Alice Moore; piano-trumpet acc.

Spirituals
12856—Fool And Wise and I Wonder My Mother Gave My Heart In Prayer, South Carolina Quartette.
12855—Way Down In Egyptland and I'm Gonna Serve God This I Do, Norfolk Jubilee Quartette.

SEND NO MONEY! If your dealer is out of the records you want, send us the coupon below. Pay postman 75 cents for each record; plus small C. O. D. fee when he delivers records. We pay postage on shipments of two or more records.

Paramount
The Popular Race Record
ELECTRICALLY RECORDED

The New York Research Laboratories will guarantee the best quality of the records checked (✓) below 75 cents each.

12854	✓	12851	✓
12852	✓	12853	✓
12857	✓	12858	✓
12855	✓	12856	✓

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____

The very final source for 'violent death' stories in regards to Charley Patton is probably to be found in Patton's own remarks to other people. In 1929, Patton while living on Jeffrey's plantation near Lula (across the Mississippi from Helena, Arkansas), told a friend, in reference to his wife: "She's killing me. She's starving me." This complaint seemed to be an echo of the first verse of *It Won't Be Long*:

*I believe 'sweet' mama, gonna do like she says, baby
She don't cook my supper, lord she'll put me in a grave.*

Although laughingly discounted by Son House, who was soon to arrive in Lula and witness Patton's successful ability to live off food stolen from the Jeffrie's kitchen by an ever obliging cook, Patton's concern was voiced to other residents. The sentiments expressed by one friend of Patton's were that Patton 'looked like he was being starved' by a 'scarey' woman. Patton's possibly recurrent belief that he was being poisoned would be explainable on quite simple grounds: an undetected 'mitral' stomach.

Patton listed his occupation as 'farmer' rather than blues singer.


*An' I keep on tellin' my rider, 'Keep our shimmies down!
Lord that jelly you're fixin' to strut will make a,
monkey man leave this town.*

In view of Patton's immortalized blabbermouthing, any number of his contemporaries, whether personal acquaintances or not, could have guessed or insisted that Patton died at the hands of a jealous woman. (Some of them may have wished this had been the case.) Certain rumours concerning the fate of other singers like Blind Lemon Jefferson (actually a heart attack victim), who also frequently described himself as a sweet man, might owe their effluence to widespread acceptance of the blues singer's projected image.

The fact that the adept 'rounder' was probably more 'precautious'—alert to danger and able to assuage a grievance against him—was entirely overlooked by the gullible public. Patton, according to Son House, knew when and how to run from an antagonist. (If the occasion demanded, he could also 'roar like a lion' to try to disguise the fact that he was threatless.) H.C. Spiers, on the other hand, noticed that Patton had a hitherto unsuspected technique of ingratiating himself with people. While Patton did not live with foresight, he was not a reckless Robert Johnson, who virtually pleaded for his own death by refusing to heed repeated warnings that mashing tactics would prove to be fatal.

Other singers adopted even more stringent security reasons: Blind Lemon Jefferson, on perceiving the entry of any unidentified person into his living quarters, would habitually draw a pistol and warn the visitor to identify himself. In fact, the very premise that a 'sweet papa' or socially undesirable 'notoreity Negro' had a higher fatality rate than those who acted or tried to act against him probably reflects only wishful thinking.

Spoonful Blues



by **Charley Patton**

HERE'S a record that "won't behave"—it's another by that famous star Charley Patton who has given us two other sensational sellers, *PONY BLUES* and *DOWN THE DIRT ROAD*. His guitar playing is 'out of this world' and does he sing you should hear him on the latest Paramount record at your dealer or mail us the coupon.

[12849—Shake It And Break It Out (Don't Let It Fall Mama)]
Vocal, Novelty, and A Spoonful Blues, guitar acc., Charley Patton

12873—Red Springs Blues and Yo Yo Blues, Vocal; guitar acc., Blind Lemon Jefferson
12875—Seven Sisters Blues and Florida Sound, Vocal; guitar acc., Ted Dafford Edwards
12880—Prison Blues and My Man Blues, Vocal; piano-trumpet acc., Alice Moore
12886—Tired of Being Misdirected, Part I and Part II, Vocal with guitar, Clifford Gibson
12793—Pony Blues and Banty Rooster Blues, Vocal; guitar acc., Charley Patton

12854—Down The Dirt Road Blues and It Won't Be Long, Vocal-guitar acc., Charley Patton
12855—Bakertop Blues and Long Distance Mean, Vocal; guitar acc., Blind Lemon Jefferson
12886—Forty Four Blues and Fiddle Sound, Vocal; piano acc., James Wiggins
12885—Down on Death Alley Blues and Five Minute Blues, Vocal; piano acc., L. Green

SPIRITUALS
12874—Take Your Burden To The Lord, Vocal; guitar acc., and Telegraph To Story, Blind Arthur Green and Bonchell
12840—The Lord Struth and Jesus Is Gonna Shake My Righteous Hand, Blind Revue Quartette

SEND NO MONEY! If your dealer is out of the records you want, send us the coupon below. Pay postman 75 cents for each record; plus small C. O. D. fee when he delivers records. We pay postage on shipments of two or more records.

Paramount
The Popular Race Record
ELECTRICALLY RECORDED

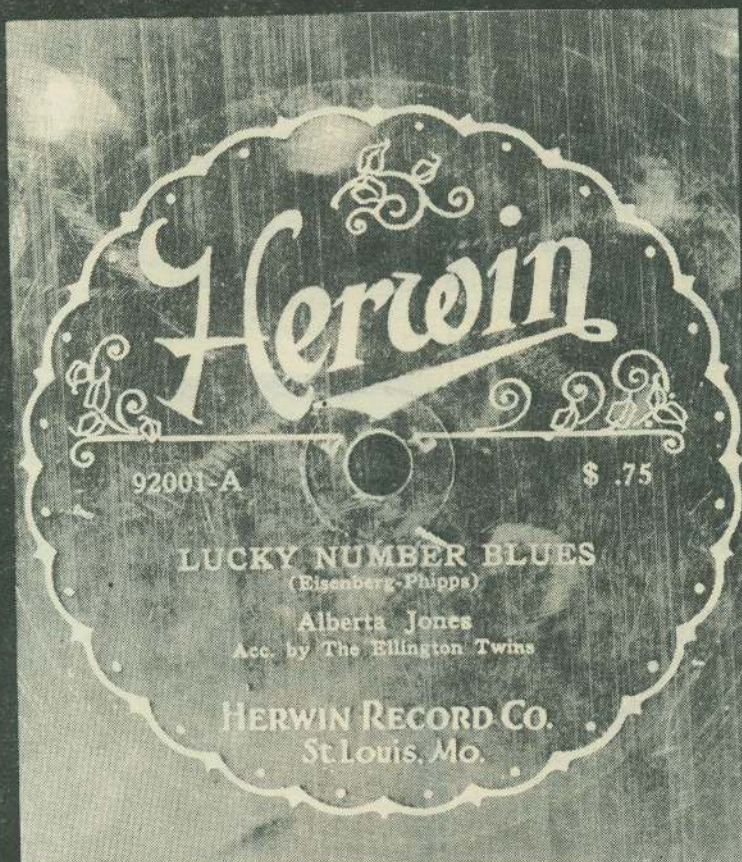
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____

Patton's food problems (indigestion) were probably the result of heart trouble.

HERWIN

PART ONE by JOHN MacKENZIE

from the collection of Gayle Dean Wardlow



(Early prototype
of a Gennett-
pressed and -labeled
Herwin.)

HERWIN—how
and when did
it begin? Who
owned it?
Was it a success?
John MacKenzie
takes us back to
the late 1920's.
The scene: St.
Louis...

Herwin

TO THE MANY who have helped me over the past ten years, this brief introduction will be redundant. To those readers who are unfamiliar with my research, it may serve to augment the scope of the following piece on the illusive Herwin record.

It has been my intent, and still is, to chronicle the activities of the magnetic Gennett label and its stable of associated labels during their electrical recording period (roughly from 1925 to 1939). If Dame Fortune is kind, this book will be on the market within two years' time. Its covers will contain, among other things: the complete master ledgers comprising over 10,000 recordings; cross-indexed numerals of the approximately 70 labels that, at one time or another, have borne the product of Gennett's recording studios in New York, Richmond, Chicago, Birmingham, etc.; the history of all firms doing business with Gennett during the 15-year electrical span; photographs of all labels and label variants involved; reproductions of important documents, supplements, advertisements, etc.; a discussion of recording methods, merchandising techniques, A&R policies, and business attitudes practiced by the parent firm; and a cross-index of all artists and the pseudonyms used to cover their identities.

I've been asked why I've limited myself to Gennett during its electrical period. I must plead a certain overwhelming fascination with the Electrobeam label as the major factor. However, aesthetics are not all that caused me to so limit my study.

It has always seemed to me that the Gennett 'mill' managed to grind the grain closest to the ground. That is, it sought out obscure artists whose styles were perhaps closest to the

tenor of the popular music of the hinterlands of America during the pre- and post-depression years. There was a certain pioneering instinct that prevailed. Witness the fact that Gennett was the first to record the truly great jazz being produced by such men as King Oliver, Bix, the N.O.R.K., et al. It is important to note that they were also first to record country music and the negro country blues singers. Though they certainly never reaped the windfalls that silver-plated the pocket books of Victor and Columbia, they nevertheless can claim a good share of the credit for introducing, via the medium of the phonograph record, the true folk art of rural America.

Here then, because I feel it should be told, is the story of one of the labels that carried Gennett's heritage.

Any corrections, deletions, or additions would certainly be most welcome. Please address any correspondence to: John K. MacKenzie, 3024 S.E. Knapp St., Portland, Oregon 97202.

The story of the Herwin record and its parent firm The Artophone Corporation of St. Louis, Missouri, begins with the year 1918.

In that year, an unincorporated entity known as The Artophone Company was begun by two brothers, Herbert S. Schiele and Edwin Schiele. They joined many little companies who, after World War I had ended and the nation had entered on a long period of prosperity, began to manufacture phonographs. Their line, called, quite naturally, Artophone, consisted of seven models. Though it was difficult seeking enough agents and dealers to carry their line, they managed to build up a sizeable business and by 1920 were ready to incorporate.

On June 10th of that year, the Schiele brothers were joined by Jesse G.

Kramer, who, along with George H. Heidemann, a St. Louis auditor, and Louis Mayer, a local attorney, formed The Artophone Corporation.

Ed Schiele had been owner and president of his own Schiele Distilling Co. in St. Louis for a number of years, and Jesse Kramer had worked for him in one capacity or another for over 10 ten years prior to the formation of Artophone. Younger brother, Herbert, had begun by working for his brother at the distillery while still a lad. It's interesting to note that Edwin Schiele maintained his interest in the liquor business even after the The Artophone Corporation was in full swing. In 1929, he was, treasurer of the famous Falstaff Brewing Company of St. Louis.

The main offices for Artophone were established at 1103 Olive Street, with a "record department" located three blocks away at 1213 Pine Street.

Under the aegis of Ed Schiele, President and majority stockholder, the firm prospered, adding lines of musical instruments and acquiring the area distributorship for Okeh and Odeon Records. By the early part of 1925 they had become distributors for Paramount and had added still more lines to their already expanding music business; Vocalstyle piano rolls, portable phonographs, radio sets and radio supplies were among the additional lines. A branch office was opened in Kansas City (203 Kansas City Life Building). Business was so good that in 1925 the initial capitalization was increased by nearly 50%. At this point, new men were brought into the business through a merger, and the Herwin label was born. But to fully understand these new developments, it is necessary to go back, for a moment, to the year 1923.

On August 20, 1923, two other St. Louis brothers, Raymond C. Laver, registrar of St. Louis' City College of Law and Finance, and Clarence W. Laver, an auditor for a local accounting firm, joined with Mr. A.M. Conroy to form the St. Louis Music Company. They set up their offices on the third floor of the old Mid-City Building at 322 N. Grand in St. Louis. A year later they had moved to new quarters at 208 N. 17th.

Thus, St. Louis Music

Company was launched on a full scale, solid attack for the acquisition of the musically inclined Public's extra dollars. Their merger with Artophone left the parent firm to concentrate on the manufacture and wholesale distribution of phonographs, radios, and a line of accessory radio and phonograph supplies.

Their principle lines of merchandise were musical instruments and musical accessories. These were handled through mail-order. By the end of 1924, however, the emphasis had shifted to records and the St. Louis Music Company had built quite a sizeable business in mail-order records, catering to the hillbilly and race markets.

At the time of their incorporation, in 1923, their major assets included an extensive mailing list, valued at \$10,000, and a few thousand dollars worth of musical instruments and accessories. Their total assets were valued at only \$20,000, compared to Artophone's initial capitalization of \$100,000. By 1925, the value of the St. Louis Music Company's assets had risen to over \$40,000 and those of The Artophone Corporation to around \$150,000. It was at this point, shortly before the summer of 1925, that the two companies decided that it would be to their mutual advantage to join forces.

Artophone's primary interest in the merger was the extensive mail-order record business that the St. Louis Music Company had built up. The Laver brothers, on the other hand, wanted the security that a large corporation like the Schiele's could offer. Also, the Schiele's wanted to capture the rural white and negro and the urban negro markets for the sale of their phonographs, reproducer heads, and accessories, in addition to the records.

On June 29, 1925, the merger was effected, and the St. Louis Music Company, still retaining its identity, became a subsidiary of Artophone. The Laver brothers were paid a little over \$12,000 each in Artophone stock for their interests. Raymond Laver was made Vice-President of Artophone and his brother Clarence was made Treasurer.

Not only were the Layers and Schieles in merchandising, they also tried their hand at music publishing. Actually, the first attempt was by Artophone in 1925 when they published Charlie Creath's tune, "Market Street Blues". The big burst of speed, however, came in 1927. In that year some 50 blues and jazz tunes written by St. Louis negro composers, lyricists, musicians, and/or vocalists were published by the St. Louis Music Publishing Company, a cover name for the Schieles' and Layers' publishing endeavors. Such outstanding composers and artists as Victoria Spivey, Lizzie Washington and Katherine Baker were among those who turned their tunes over to Artophone. Many of these same tunes, incidentally, were ones recorded by Gennett in 1927.

In the course of the next few years, the St. Louis Music Co. also booked talent and handled artists, mainly in the negro music vein. The choice of race and hillbilly music was a logical one. Electing to sell through mail-order precludes that the vast majority of potential buyers will come from rural areas.

These same rural areas contained large numbers of both colored and white families whose predominant musical tastes would tend to folk music. Artophone concentrated on the Midwest and the Southern Central United States. By 1930, they were claiming to be the "world's largest distributor of race records by mail". No such claims were made for their hillbilly records, though, as the massive Sears, Roebuck & Company could easily have won in that category! The price of the major label race and hillbilly records ordered through the subsidiary St. Louis Music Company was a straight 75¢/each with no discounts for volume.

This price may have been satisfactory for the early '20's but by 1926, the influx of cheaper records and the mass merchandising techniques for records cut deeply into the profits of those who attempted to sell nothing but 75¢ records. Certainly, the mail-order business was not one that could expect to maintain high profits

against a background of such stiff competition. The primary reason for the Layers' and the Schieles' decision to introduce the Herwin label was that they wanted to make their own selection of artists and tunes that they would handle. This was denied them by Okeh, Vocalion and Columbia. Herbert Schiele and Ray Laver were in charge of making such selections. Also, their contact with many St. Louis negro artists was of value to Gennett and Paramount in arranging for recording sessions and tunes to record.

The new record was, of course, Herwin, a composite of the first three letters of Herbert Schiele's first name and the last three letters of Edwin Schiele's first name.



Label Type A: Gennett-pressed and -labeled.

The Herwin trade mark was registered with the U.S. Patent Office, not for records, but for ukeleles, banjo ukes, mandolins, and guitars. Artophone claimed that they had used this mark as early as January 5, 1926. Artophone also registered other trademarks for the same date: Puritan (for tenor banjos); Queen Brand, Artone, and Royal (for instrument strings); and Reliance (for main springs, reproducers, tone arms, and micas).



Label Type B: Paramount-pressed and -labeled.

It is not known exactly when the first Herwin records appeared. Various dates have been offered by researchers. Even Mr. Herbert Schiele himself is not sure as to the exact date. However, it would be fairly reasonable to assume that Herwin records were introduced in late 1925, just prior to the date claimed by Artophone for the Herwin trademark.

Three record companies pressed, labelled, and shipped Herwins to St. Louis for Artophone: the Starr Piano Company (Gennett Records Division), the New York Recording Laboratories (Paramount), and another, as yet undetermined, firm.

Close examination of the Herwin labels clearly shows that there were actually three different labels, each differing from the other in small details. Also, the method of pressing differs between the three Herwin records, thus proving that Artophone had separate dealings with all three companies. Apparently, this had a lot to do with the mix-ups that occur within the Herwin numerical series. Thus, we find a doubling of release numbers. Gennett would press a record and affix the Herwin label with its assigned serial number, while, at the same time, Paramount would be pressing and labelling another Herwin coupling with the same serial number!

The materials, (ratio of shellac to filler) used for Herwin were quite poor, in order to save costs in pressing. The quality of material was roughly similar to that of Challenge, thus it is extremely difficult to find a Herwin that plays as good as it looks. Also, this accounts for the fact that few Herwins are to be found today. They were worn out so quickly that most were discarded before they were tired of.

Herwins were probably never promoted in major market areas. It is more likely that they were offered solely to the rural markets. The method of advertising used by Artophone for its major labels (Okeh, Columbia, and Paramount, and, later, Vocalion) was to run ads in the city newspapers. An ad which appeared in the April 9, 1927, edition of the famed negro weekly, THE CHICAGO DEFENDER, is probably typical. The race items from the catalogs of Okeh, Columbia, and Paramount were offered for sale through the St. Louis Music Company using a box number in St. Louis. A free, 56-page catalog was also offered listing those records then in stock. To the best of my knowledge, no such catalogs have ever come to light, so it is impossible to

say whether or not Herwin records were also listed therein.

Apparently, the method of advertising Herwins was quite frugal. Persons who had bought records, phonographs, musical instruments, musical supplies, etc. from Artophone or the St. Louis Music Company were sent monthly flyers, printed by the MISSOURI RURALIST, listing the new Herwin releases. It may have been that this was the ONLY way Artophone obtained customers for their Herwins, though Robert Schiele claims that ads were run in regional farm journals of the period urging people to become Herwin devotees. However, researchers like John Randolph of Fulton, Missouri, have spent many hours pouring over the pages of dozens of different farm journals —without success.

Get LATEST
This BLUES HIT!
No. 12454
"RABBIT
FOOT"
BLUES
By BLIND LEMON
Jefferson
Singing his most
Sensational Song
Buy By Mail! You can save money by buying records by mail. Send us your money order or check for \$1.00 and we will send you the record of your choice. It is the best of all records. It is the best of all records. It is the best of all records.

Choose from this list

We Pay Postage

Order Your Record On This Coupon

We'll Pay You \$1.00
for the Old Reproducer
on Your Phonograph

Startling Revelation of New Beauty in Your Old Records with the Amazing Rayophonic Reproducer

Guaranteed to Increase tone Volume of Your Phonograph 50%

Good-bye Needle & Scratch! Have that constant knocking, scratching, and the loss of a lot of your old records. Don't waste your money. This is your chance to get the best of all records. It is the best of all records. It is the best of all records.

You Must Find Out for Yourself You'll have to discover for yourself the power of the Rayophonic Reproducer. It will make your old records sound like new. It will make your old records sound like new. It will make your old records sound like new.

10 Day Trial Try the Rayophonic Reproducer in your own home for 10 days. If you don't like it, we will take it back. No money back. No money back. No money back.

\$1.00 Your Old Reproducer You'll have no need for the reproducer that is on your phonograph. Send us your old reproducer. We will pay you \$1.00 for it. We will pay you \$1.00 for it. We will pay you \$1.00 for it.

SEND NO MONEY

Clip the COUPON

ST. LOUIS MUSIC COMPANY, ST. LOUIS, MO.

courtesy of Nick Perls

This April 9, 1927 mail order ad in the Chicago Defender was placed by the owners of the Herwin label.

Though Artophone's gross annual sales during its peak periods in the '20s were between six and seven hundred thousand dollars, only a small portion was from the sale of records, and an extremely small proportion of the record sales were derived from Herwins.

By the end of 1928 the mail-order record business was beginning to grind to a halt. Only a few companies were to survive the depression, the notable ones being Sears and Montgomery Ward. By the late 1920's, even the small rural markets had their own record shoppes and dime-store record counters. One would assume that customers would naturally prefer to go to these firms where they could listen before buying.

Raymond Layer's health had declined by 1929 and Edwin Schiele assumed presidency of the St. Louis Music Company. On June 22, 1929, however, Mr. Schiele decided to dissolve their subsidiary, and back out of the mail-order business gracefully. By 1930, they had left the field entirely. The latest master used on a Herwin was cut in April, 1929, by the Biddleville Quintette for N.Y.R.L. and issued as by the Mississippi Quintette on Herwin 92034. This indicates that Herwins may have continued to be released until the summer of 1929, but certainly no later.

In 1930, the remainder stock of Herwin records along with the mailing list of Herwin customers was sold to the New York Recording Laboratories. Just how many records were included in that stock and what became of them after they were hauled out of St. Louis is still a mystery.

The Artophone Corporation did not collapse under the black cloud of the Great Depression, however. In fact, they added electrical refrigerators and miscellaneous electrical appliances to their line of merchandise. In 1965, they were still going strong as wholesale distributors for Armstrong Floor Coverings, Youngstown Kitchens, Tappan gas ranges, G.E. water coolers, and yes, Artophone Phonographs!

Both of the Layer brothers have passed away. Ed Schiele died in the 1940's, and most of the other early officials of the St. Louis Music Company and The Artophone Corporation have either dropped out of sight or have passed away. Only Jesse Kramer, retired former secretary of Artophone, and Herbert Schiele, its current president, remain to recall with mixed pleasure and frustration the days that were.

HERWIN NUMERICAL

92000 series: race records

92001 (A) Lucky Number Blues (GEX 323)—ALBERTA JONES ACC. BY THE ELLINGTON TWINS; (B) I'm Gonna Put You Right In Jail (GEX 324A)—SAME. Label Type A; Both sides also on Ge 3404, Ch 15180, & Silv 5025.

92002 (A) Bye and Bye (GEX 355) NAZARENE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CHOIR; (B) Joshua Fit De Battle of Jericho (GEX 354)—SAME. Label Type A; Both sides also on Ge 6004, Silv 5022, GS 2016, BP 8018, VoE X-9964; (A) side also on Ch 15380 as by NAZARENE CHOIR; (B) side also on Ch 15358 as by NAZARENE CHOIR.

92003 (A) Amazing Grace (GEX 362)—REV. J.M. GATES & HIS CONGREGATION; (B) I'll Be Satisfied When My Soul Is Resting In The Presence Of The Lord (GEX 369)—SAME. Label Type A; Both sides also on Ge 6013, Para 12782, Buy 5090, & BP8015; (A) side also on Ch 15199 & Silv 5021; (B) side also on Ch 15210 & Silv 5019. NOTE: (B) side is variously titled as "I'll Be Satisfied"/"I'll Be Satisfied (When My Soul Is Resting In The Presence Of The Lord)". NOTE: Some issues may read: REV. J.M. GATES AND HIS CONGREGATION or REV. J.M. GATES AND CONGREGATION. NOTE: On the Paramount and Broadway issues, control numbers were added by Paramount as follows: (A) 1251, (B) 1252.



92004 (A) I'm So Glad Trouble Don't Last Always (GEX 364)—REV. J.M. GATES & HIS CONGREGATION; (B) I'm Going To Heaven If It Takes My Life (GEX 365)—SAME. Label Type A; (A) side also on Ge 6019, Ch 15135,

Silv 5018, & BP 8014; (B) side also on GE 6034, CH 15199, Silv 5021, & BP 8016. NOTE: Some issues may read: REV. J.M. GATES AND HIS CONGREGATION.

92005 (A) I Know I Got Religion (GEX 363)—REV. J.M. GATES & HIS CONGREGATION; (B) Waiting At The Beautiful Gate (GEX 366)—SAME. Label Type A; (A) side also on GE 6034, CH 15223, Silv 5020, & BP 8016 (B) side also on GE 6042, CH 15235, & Silv 5019. NOTE: Some issues may read: REV. J.M. GATES AND HIS CONGREGATION.

92006 (A) I'm Gonna Die With A Staff In My Hand (GEX 367)—REV. J.M. GATES & HIS CONGREGATION; (B) You belong To That Funeral Train (GEX 368)—SAME. Label Type A; (A) side also on GE 6019, CH 15235, Silv 5020, & BP 8014 (B) side also on GE 6042, & Silv 5018.

92007 () Lord, I'm Troubled (2260-1)—HERWIN FAMOUS JUBILEE SINGERS. () This Train is Bound For Glory (2269-2)—SAME. Label Type B; Both sides also on Para 12315 as by WOODS FAMOUS BLIND JUBILEE SINGERS, and on Bwy 5024 as by JACOB'S BLIND SINGERS.

92008 () Oh Lord What A Morning (2099-2)—DOWN HOME JUBILEE SINGERS; () Hand Me Down The Silver Trumpet (2100-2)—SAME. Label Type B; Both sides also on Para 12285 as by SUNSET JUBILEE QUARTETTE.

92009 () Lord I Can't Stay Away (6057)—SOUTHLAND JUBILEE SINGERS; () Get On Board, Little Children, Get On Board (2051-2)—SOUTHLAND JUBILEE QUARTETTE. Label Type B; (A) side also on Para 12076 and probably also on Rainbow as by WISEMAN SEXTETTE with Orchestra; (B) side also on Para 12268 as by NORFOLK JUBILEE QUARTETTE.

92010 () The New Birth (506- : 570)—REV R.C. WOODSWORTH; () Well of Salvation (510- : 571)—SAME. Label Type B; Both sides also on Para 12476 as by C.H. GATEWOOD; Both sides probably also on Merritt 2204 as by REV. H.C. GATEWOOD (D.D.I.M.R.A.) assisted by the Faithful Worshippers. On the Merritt issue the (A) side is titled "Regeneration" and the (B) side is titled "The Well Of Salvation". NOTE: Master numbers on the Merritt are 507 and 509, respectively. Aural evidence is the only means of proving that all issues are the same.

92011 (A) There's Room Enough In Heaven for Us All (GE-12617A)—PACE JUBILEE SINGERS; (B) Steal Away and Pray (GE-12618A)—SAME. Label Type A; Both sides also on Ge 6072, QRS 7017, & BP 8011; Both sides also on Ch 15249 as by DIXIE JUBILEE SINGERS.

92012 (A) Goofer Dust Blues (9099-1,2)—TRILBY HARGENS; (B) Stompin' Around (10000-1)—SAME. Label Type B; Both sides also on Para 12250 as by THELMA LAVIZZO acc. by New Orleans Creoles, and on Silv 3547 as by MABEL NANCE. NOTE: On Paramount and Silvertone issues the tube titles are "The Stomps" and "New Orleans Goofer Dust Blues", respectively.

92013 (A) East Coast Blues (GE-12713A)—LIZZIE WASHINGTON; (B) Working Man Blues (GE-12715)—SAME. Label Type A; (A) side also on Ge 6134, & Ch 15303; (B) side also on Ge 6181.

courtesy of John MacKenzie



92014(A) Salt Tear Blues (GE-12720A)—JELLY ROLL ANDERSON; (B) Good Time Blues (GE-12719)—SAME. Label Type A; (A) side also on Ge 6226; (B) side also on Ge 6181.

92015(A) Cane Brake Blues (3029-1)—MAMIE BLACKBURN; (B) Bird Nest Blues (3030- : 385)—SAME. Label Type B: First side also on Para 12398 as by ARDELL BRAGG; Second side also on Para 12410 as by ARDELLE "SHELLY" BRAGG. NOTE: On Paramount 12398 tune is titled "Canebreak Blues".

92016(A) 2.16 Blues (4127-2:622)—BLANCHE JOHNSON; (B) Galveston Blues (4128-1:623)—SAME. Label Type B: True artist identity still open to speculation, but it could well be Jeanette James acc. by Mary Lou Williams.

92017(A) My Man Left Me Blues (GE-12728A)—KATHERINE BAKER; (B) I Helped You, Sick Man, When You Were Sick and Down (GE-12729)—SAME. Label Type A; (A) side also on Ge 6157, and on Ch 15302 & Silv 5133 as by ROSE TATE; (B) side also on Ge 6125.

92019() Back Home Blues (2762-2)—BIRMINGHAM BLUETETTE; () Old Man Blues (2601-1,-2)—SAME. Label Type B: First side also on Para 12279 as by JONES' PARAMOUNT CHARLESTON FOUR; second side possibly by BLYTHE'S RAGAMUFFINS but unissued on Paramount. NOTE: On Para 12279 tune is titled "Homeward Bound Blues".

92020(A) Free Women Blues (GE-12718)—JELLY ROLL ANDERSON; (B) I.C. Blues (GE-12722)—SAME. Label Type A: Both sides on Ge 6135; (A) side also on Ch 15281, & Silv 5121 as by JELLY ROLL JOHNSON.

92021(A) My Low Down Brown (GE-12714A)—LIZZIE WASHINGTON; (B) Skeleton Key Blues —3- (GE-12712A)—SAME. Label Type A: (A) side also on Ge 6126, & Ch 15303; (B) side also on Ge 6134, & Ch 15282.

92022(A) Don't Think That You Got Your Man All By Yourself (GE-12717)—KATHERINE BAKER; (B) Chicago Fire Blues (GE-12716A)—SAME. Label Type A: (A) side also on Ge 6125, and on Ch 15302, & Silv 5168 as by ROSE TATE; (B) side also on Ge 6157.

92025(A) Ash Can Stomp (GE-12727A)—HENRY JOHNSON & HIS BOYS; (B) Neck Bones And Beans (GE-12726A)—SAME. Label Type A: Both sides also on Ge 6168; (A) side also on Ch 15437 as by HANK JONES & HIS GINGER, and on BP 8037 as by PERRY & HIS STOMP BAND; (B) side also on Ch 15338 as by HANK JONES & HIS GINGER, and on Superior (?) 351 as by ???

92026—UNKNOWN

92027—UNKNOWN

92028—UNKNOWN

92029—UNKNOWN

92030(A) Jesus Lay Your Head In The Window (2397-2)—MOBILE FOUR; () I'm Gonna Do All I Can For My Lord (2396-2)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12356 as by NORFOLK JUBILEE QUARTETTE.

92031(A) I Heard The Voice Of Jesus Say Come Unto Me And Rest (2691-2)—MISSISSIPPI QUINTETTE; (B) Fight On Your Time Ain't Long (2687-3)—SAME. Label Type B: (A) & (B) sides also on Para 12396 as by BIDDLEVILLE QUINTETTE, and on Buy TPPE 5003 as by BIRMINGHAM QUINTETTE.



92023(A) I Have Crossed The Separating Line (1480: 183A)—HERWIN GOSPEL TEAM; (B) You've Got To Meet Your God Somewhere (1481: 186A)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12838 and QRS 7027 as by JUBILEE GOSPEL TEAM. NOTE: Both sides also on Herwin 93023 as HERWIN GOSPEL TEAM.

92023() The Resurrection (GEX 596A)—REV. GEORGE H. SIMS & CONGREGATION; () Let The Church Go On (GEX 597B)—SAME. Label Type A: Both sides also on Ge 6123; First side also on Ch 15284.

92024(A) Hawaiian Harmony Blues (GE-12724A)—HENRY JOHNSON & HIS BOYS; (B) Blue Hawaii (GE-12723A)—SAME. Label Type A: Both sides also on Ge 6156, and on Ch 15434 as by GEORGE THOMAS & HIS BOYS.

92032(A) Prodigal Son (511:4150-1)—MISSISSIPPI QUINTETTE; (B) In The Garden Of Gethsemane (512: 4151-1,-2)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12462 as by BIDDLEVILLE QUINTETTE.

92033() I've Got A Home In That Rock (395:3082-2)—LAURA GRAYSON AND FLEETWOOD JUBILEE SINGERS; () God's Gonna Set This World On Fire (409:3086-1)—HERWIN LADIES FOUR. Label Type B: First side also on Para 12414 as by GRACE OUTLAW AND FLORIDA JUBILEE SINGERS; second side also on Para 12415 as by PARAMOUNT LADIES FOUR.

92034(A) After A While (307:6765-1)—REV. J.M. GATES; (B) Baptize (398:6762-3)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12416 and Buy 5004; (A) side also on Cong 7083, Silv 1548, and Ban 1881, and also on Dom 3853 and Or 745 as by REV. SAM HALL JONES; (B) side also on Ro 401, Cong 7078, and Silv 1547, and also on Dom 3830 and Or 719 as by REV. SAM HALL JONES. NOTE: Tune title on all but Herwin issue is "Baptize Me".

92018(A) Goose Grease (4188-2:501)—THE JELLY WHIPPERS; (B) S.O.B. Blues (2762-2)—SAME. Label Type B: First side also on Para 12405 as by DIXON'S JAZZ MANIACS; second side also on Para 12457 as by JOHN WILLIAMS SYNCO JAZZERS. NOTE: On Para 12405 tune is titled "D A D Blues".

92035 (A) Dying Gambler (416:6763-2)
—REV. J.M. GATES; (B) Praying For
The Pastor (417:6764-2)—SAME. Label
Type B: Both sides also on Para 12427,
Her 93019, and Buy 5008; (A) side also
on Cong 7078 and Silv 1547, and on Dom
3830 and Or 745 as by REV. SAM HALL
JONES; (B) side also on Ban 1881, Cong
7083, and Silv 1548, and on Dom 3853
and on Or 719 as by REV. SAM HALL
JONES.

**92035 (A) Take Your Burdens To The
Lord (1588:GE-15645A)—BLIND WILLIE
JACKSON AND BROTHER; (B) Telephone
To Glory (1589:GE-15646)—SAME. Label
Type B: Both sides also on Para 12874
as by BLIND ARTHUR GROOM AND BRO.,
and on Crown 3326 and Buy 5050 as by
BLIND WILLIE JACKSON AND BROTHER;
(A) side also on Vs 6006 as by JUBILEE
MALE QUARTET; (B) side also on Vs
6007 as by JUBILEE MALE QUARTET.
NOTE 1: Additional control numbers are
present on the Crown issue, as follows:
C1719/C1720. NOTE 2: Varsity 6006 and
6007 were inadvertently cross-mastered
with the result that the label on 6006
indicates the presence of "Telephone To
Glory" but is actually "Clank-A-Lanka
(Sleep On Mother)" by the FAMOUS BLUE
JAY SINGERS OF BIRMINGHAM; whereas,
the label on 6007 indicates the presence
of "Clank-A-Lanka" (sic) but is actually
"Telephone To Glory". NOTE 3: In the
Gennett ledger, the artist credits are to
BLIND ROOSEVELT GRAVES AND
BROTHER.**

**92036 () I'm Going If It Takes
My Life (527:6735-1)—REV. J.M.
GATES AND HIS CONGREGATION;
() The Funeral Train A-Coming
(456:6927-1)—SAME. Label Type B:
First side also on Para 12460 and
Buy 5026, and also on Or 839 as by
REV. SAM HALL JONES; Second
side also on Para 12440, Ba 1902,
Or 794 as by REV. SAM HALL JONES.
NOTE 1: On Cong 7080, Dom 3872,
Or 794, and Ro 400 the tune title is
shown as "Death's Black Train Is
Coming". NOTE 2: On Or 839 the tune
title is shown as "I'm Going To
Heaven Anyhow". NOTE 3: Label
credits on all but Domino and Oriole
may appear as REV. J.M. GATES/
REV. J.M. GATES AND CONGREGATION.**



**92036 (A) Lord I'm Discouraged
(1629:GE-15226)—CHARLEY PET-
ERS; (B) I'm Goin' Home (P1630:
GE-15227)—SAME. Label Type B:
Both sides also on Para 12883 as by
CHARLEY PATTON. NOTE 1: These
are Gennett-recorded masters that
were sold outright to Paramount for
\$40.00 each. NOTE 2: Gennett ledgers
give credits to CHARLEY PATTON.
NOTE 3: Gennett ledgers show second
tune title as "I'm Going Home".**

**92037 (A) Daddy Sunshine Blues
(GE-12801A)—KATHERINE BAKER;
(B) Money Women Blues (GE-12804B)
—SAME. Label Type A: Both sides also
on Ge 6228; (B) side also on Ch 15417
and Silv 5133 as by ROSE TATE.**

**92037 (A) When The Moon Goes Down
(2904-2)—GEORGIA SACRED SINGERS;
(B) Moanin' In The Land Will Soon Be
Over (6108-2)—SAME. Label Type B:
(A) & (B) sides both on Para 12890 as
NORFOLK JUBILEE QUARTETTE,
and both on Buy 5049 as by GEORGIA
SACRED SINGERS.**

courtesy of Bernard Klatzko



**92038 (A) Troubled 'Bout My Soul
(21413-2)—FRANK JOHNSON; (B) Ain't
Gonna Lay My 'Ligion Down (21412-1)
—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also
on Para 12893 as by FRANK PALMES.**

**92038 (A) I had To Come Back Home
Blues (GE-12802B)—KATHERINE
BAKER; (B) Wild Women Blues (GE-
12800A)—SAME. Label Type A: Both
sides also on Ge 6194; (B) side also on
Ch 15319 as by ROSE TATE.**

**92039 (A) Mistreated Blues (GE-12803B);
—KATHERINE BAKER; (B) Lord Have
Mercy Blues (GE-12806A)—LIZZIE WASH-
INGTON. Label Type A: (A) side also on
Ge 6321, and on Ch 15417 and Silv 5168
as by ROSE TATE.**

**92040 (A) Fall Or Summer Blues (GE-
12805)—LIZZIE WASHINGTON; (B)
Mexico Blues (GE-12807A)—SAME. Label
Type A: (A) side also on Ge 6195, and on
Ch 15435 as by SADIE REED; (B) side
also on BP 8054.**

**92041 (A) Sport Model Mama Blues
(GE-12808)—LIZZIE WASHINGTON; (B)
Brick Flat Blues (GE-12809)—SAME.
Label Type A: (A) side also on Ge 6195
and Ch 15389, and on Silv 5134 as by
MAMIE WILLIAMS; (B) side also on Ge 6321**

**92042 (A) Daddy Threw Me Down Blues
(GE-12810)—LIZZIE WASHINGTON; (B)
Ease Away Blues (GE-12711)—SAME.
Label Type A: Both sides also on Ge
Label Type A: (A) side also on BP 8054;
(B) side also on Ge 6408, and on Silv
5134 as by MAMIE WILLIAMS, and on Ch
15435 as by SADIE REED.**

**92043 (A) The Jailhouse Blues
(GE-12736)—SAM COLLINS; (B)
Riverside Blues (GE-12740)—SAME.
Label Type A: Both sides also on
Ge 6167 and BP 8025; (A) side also
on Ch 15320 and Silv 5127 as by
JIM FOSTER, and on Supt 9291 as
by ???; (B) side also on Ch 15301
as by JIM FOSTER. NOTE: On
some of the above issues the tune
title on the (A) side may appear as
"The Jail House Blues".**

**92044 (A) Congo Stomp (GEX 833)
—FRANK BUNCH & HIS FUZZY
WUZZIES; (B) Fourth Avenue Stomp
(GEX 832A)—SAME. Label Type A:
Both sides also on Ge 6293; (A) side
also on Ch 15415 as by THE ALA-
BAMA FUZZY WUZZIES; (B) side
also on Ch 15398 as by THE NEW
ORLEANS STRUTTERS, and on Bell
1174 as by LITTLE JOE JACKSON
AND HIS BOYS. NOTE: On Bell 1174
tune titled as "Fourth Ave. Stomp".**

92045 and upwards UNKNOWN

93000 series: race records

93001 UNKNOWN

**93002 (A) Certainly Lord (GE-12934)
—PENTACOST JUBILEE SINGERS;
(B) Heaven's Door's Gonna Be Closed
(GE-12630)—SAME. Label Type A: Both
sides also on Para 12678 as by PACE
JUBILEE SINGERS; (A) side also on
BP 8043 as by PACE JUBILEE
SINGERS; (B) side also on Ge 6092 as
DIXIE JUBILEE SINGERS, and on BP
8012 as by PACE JUBILEE SINGERS.**

**93003 () Down By The Riverside
(2812-2)—NAZARETH JUBILEE QUAR-
TET; () Swing Low Sweet Chariot
(2811-2)—SAME. Label Type B: Both
sides also on Para 12445 as by
NORFOLK JUBILEE QUARTETTE.**



**93004 (A) Where Shall I Be?
(20073-2)—ELDER J.C. BROWN;
(B) He Arose From The Dead (967:
4579-1)—SAME. Label Type B: Both
sides also on Para 12585 as by
DEACON L.J. BATES. NOTE: These
sides are actually by Blind Lemon
Jefferson.**

**93005 (A) Rock Of Ages (20568)—
BLIND WILLIE JACKSON; (B) When
The Saints Go Marching In (20298)—
SAME. Label Type B: Both sides
also on Para 12658 as by BLIND
WILLIE DAVIS.**

93006 UNKNOWN

93007 UNKNOWN

93008 () *There's A Handwriting On The Wall* (20940-4)—BLIND TIM RUSSELL; () *I've Crossed The Separation Line* (20943-5)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12717 as by BLIND JOE TAGGART, and on Buy 5089 as by BLIND JOE DONNELL.

93009 UNKNOWN

93010 (A) *Old Time Baptism, Part 1* (20285; 20285-3)—REV. M.M. MILLER; (B) *Old Time Baptism, Part 11* (20285; 20284-3)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12618 as by REV. M.M. MASSEY.

93011 (A) *The Snitches Blues* (GE-15153A: 1269)—JERRY LEE; (B) *The Ducks Yas Yas* (GE-15164A: 1270)—WALTER HOGAN. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12786 as by GEORGE HANNAH and JACK O' DIAMONDS, respectively.

93012 (A) *St. Louis Blues* (GE-15159: 1271)—THE HARLEM TRIO; (B) *Fuzzy Wuzzy* (GE-15160A: 1272)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12787 as by MOORE-MOMAN-BURTON.

93013 UNKNOWN

93014 () *Sing Song Blues* (GE-15167: 1293)—BEN CONWAY; () *Smiling Blues* (GE-15166: 1294)—JERRY LEE. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12791 as by BOB COLEMAN and JACK O' DIAMONDS, respectively.

93015 () *Steal Away Blues* (21184-1)—HERWIN HOT SHOTS; () *Salty Dog* (21185-1, -2)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12779 as by PARAMOUNT PICKERS, and on Buy 5069 as by BROADWAY PICKERS. NOTE: On both the Paramount and Broadway issues the first tune title is shown as "Steal Away."

93016 () *Southland Blues* (P21141-2)—GEORGE SEYMOUR; () *Sad Story Blues* (P21142-2)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12806 as by GUY SMITH.

93017 () *Playing The Dozen* (21146-1)—CHARLIE EATON; () *Bucket Of Blood* (21144-2)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12773 as by WILL EZELL.

93018 () *Ghost Woman Blues* (21158-2)—BOB CRANE; () *Weeping Willow Woman* (21155-1)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12769 as by GEORGE CARTER.



93019 (A) *Dying Gambler* (417: 6764-2)—REV. J.M. GATES; (B) *Praying For The Pastor* 416: 6763-2)—SAME. Label Type B: See Herwin 92035 for details of co-issues.

93020 UNKNOWN

93021 UNKNOWN

93022 UNKNOWN

93023 (A) *I Have Crossed The Separating Line* (1480: 183A)—HERWIN GOSPEL TEAM; (B) *You've Got To Meet Your God Someday* (1481: 186A)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12838 and QRS 7027 as by JUBILEE GOSPEL TEAM.

93024 () *Wasn't That A Mighty Day?* (1494: 422A)—MISSISSIPPI QUINTET; () *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* (1495: 440A)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12845 and QRS 7070 as by BIDDLEVILLE QUINTETTE.

93025 () *Lord, I Don't Care Where They Bury My Body* (2905-2)—GEORGIA SACRED SINGERS; () *He Just Hung His Head And Died* (2902-2)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12734 and Ch 50005 as by NORFOLK JUBILEE QUARTETTE, and on Buy 5047 as by GEORGIA SACRED SINGERS.

93026 () *I Want To Cross Over To See My Lord* (2714-4)—GEORGIA SACRED SINGERS; () *I'm Nearer My Home* (2814-1)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12694 and Ch 50020 as by NORFOLK JUBILEE QUARTETTE. NOTE: Take no. 4 of 2nd side issued on Paramount.

93027 (A) *Religion Is Something Within You* (21040-1)—BLIND JEREMIAH TAYLOR; (B) *Mother's Love* (21041-1)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12744 as by BLIND JOE TAGGART.

93028 () *His Eye Is On The Sparrow* (2887-1)—GEORGIA SACRED SINGERS; () *I Wouldn't Mind Dying If Dying Was All* (2886-2)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12630 as by NORFOLK JUBILEE QUARTETTE and on Buy 5048 as by GEORGIA SACRED SINGERS.

93029 UNKNOWN

93030 UNKNOWN

93031 (A) *All I Want Is That Pure Religion* (344: 11041-1)—DEACON JACKSON; (B) *I Want To Be Like Jesus In My Heart* (345: 11040-1)—SAME. Label Type B: Both sides also on Para 12386 as by DEACON L.J. BATES. NOTE: These sides are actually by Blind Lemon Jefferson.

93032 and upwards UNKNOWN



55000 series: popular records

55001 UNKNOWN

55002 UNKNOWN

55003 (A) *Chinese Moon* (X 240A)—???; (B) *Don't Sing Aloha When I Go* (GEX 329A)—TENNESSEE MELODY RIDERS. Label Type A: (A) side also on Ge 3371 as by MATT S MELODY KINGS, on GS 2013 as by DICK BEESON'S MELODY BOYS, on Ch 15141 as by JOHNNIE'S RADIO BAND, and on Chlg 121 as by ROYAL NORTHWEST COLLEGIANS; (B) side also on Ge 3404, GS 2012, and Starr 23083 as by WILLIE CREAGER'S RHYTHM ACES, and on Ch 15182 as by GEORGIA COLLEGIANS, on Silu 3841, Chlg 210, & VoE X-9939 as by ??? NOTE: (B) side was derived from a Berliner master, no. E2561B.

55004 () *Messin' Around* (X 223C)—JOE CANDULLO & HIS ORCH.; () *Black Bottom* (X 221A)—SAME. Label Type A: First side also on Ge 3359 and Chlg 127 as by JOE CANDULLO & HIS EVERGLADES ORCH., on Ch 15132 as by THE ALOMO GARDEN JAZZERS, and on Buddy 8070 as by MMM; second side also on Ge 3358, Chlg 127, and on Chlg 352 as by JOE CANDULLO & HIS EVERGLADES ORCH., on Silu 3834 as by JOE CANDULLO & HIS EVERGLADES ORCH., on Ch 15133 as by THE ALOMO GARDEN JAZZERS, and on Buddy 8069 as by ??? NOTE: both sides were derived from Berliner masters, no. E2481C and E2479B, respectively.

55005 (A) *Because I Love You* (GEX 304A)—TENNESSEE MELODY RIDERS; (B) *How Many Times* (X 207)—HELEN ALLEN. Label Type A: (A) side also on Ge 3390 and GS 2006 as by WILLIE CREAGER & HIS ORCH., on Ch 15172 as by THE GEORGIA COLLEGIANS, and on Chlg 115 as by CHALLENGE DANCE ORCHESTRA; (B) side also on Ge 3347 and Ch 15136 as by VAUGHN DE LEATH acc. by METROPOLITAN TRIO, and on Chlg 190 as by MADGE THOMPSON.

55006 and up UNKNOWN

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EDITORS NOTE: A special word of thanks to Gayle Wardlow for his assistance on new information on Herwin discography and label photographs.

...to be continued in the next issue of 78 Quarterly...COMING!...the rare, little-known Herwin 75000 series!

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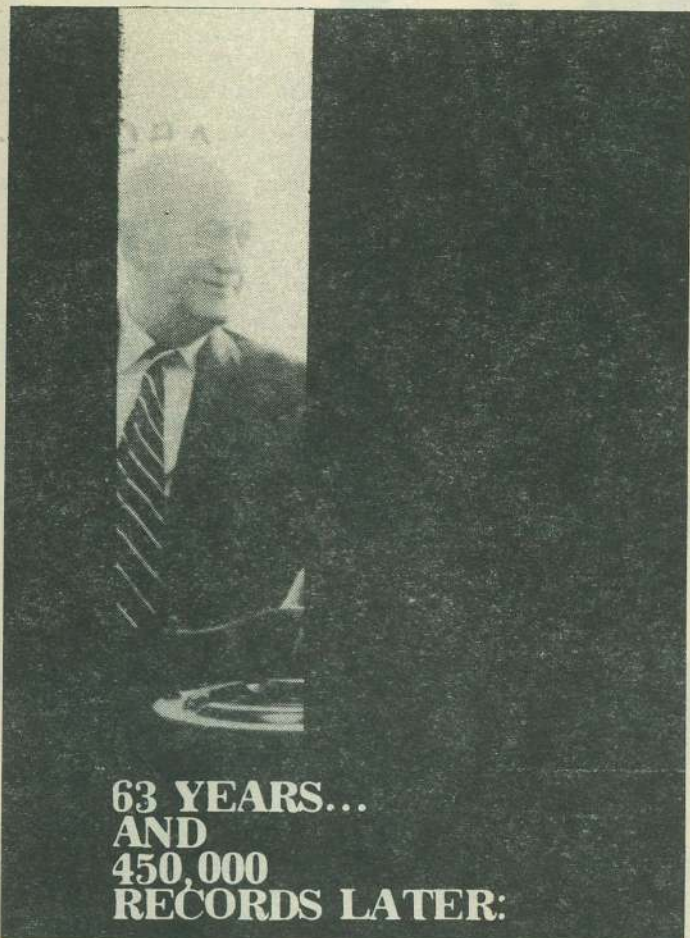
**THE WORLD'S LARGEST
COLLECTION OF 78s....
WHO OWNS THEM? WHERE
ARE THEY? HOW MUCH
ARE THEY WORTH? WHO
BUYS THEM? WHO TRYS
TO STEAL THEM? HOW
WERE THEY ACQUIRED?
WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM?
WHICH ARE THE RAREST?
WHEN DID IT ALL BEGIN?**

27



100 West 82nd Street

JACOB S. SCHNEIDER



**63 YEARS...
AND
450,000
RECORDS LATER:**

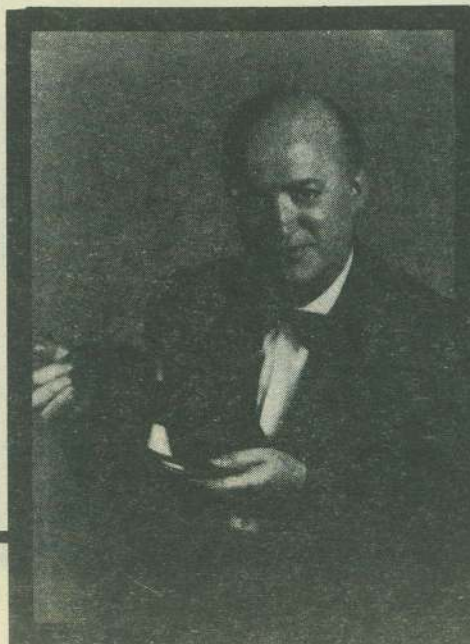
By PETE WHELAN

At 100 West 82nd Street a 19th Century brownstone adjoins the Hotel Endicott at the southwest corner of Columbus Avenue. Here, on the first floor behind double doors and caged windows is the world's largest collection of 78 records (more than 450,000 of them). There's a Chinese laundry next door, and it may have been abandoned for the last five years. You can't be sure. Much of New York City's Upper West Side spends time waiting for its luck to change—like the young-old Puerto Ricans in continental suits waiting near the Chinese laundry. Just waiting.

Directly across the street is a disappearing liquor store: it lights intense neons at night, then vanishes by daylight. There used to be a lot more brownstones down the block towards Amsterdam Avenue, but they were clubbed down by the huge metal wrecking balls. The segments were broken into smaller segments and hauled by truck up to this dump in the Bronx.

Today, the middle of the 82nd Street block between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues is an open rock field enclosed by a chicken wire fence. It is destined for a new municipal project by city planners who live in the country, play golf on Sunday, and bring their briefcases to work in Manhattan.

Late Saturday morning the lights go on behind the caged windows of 100 W. 82. (The lights are on every Tuesday night and all day Saturday and Sunday.) The entrance has a white Victorian column on each side. You climb a step, ring the bell, listen for the sound of the bell and hear nothing. However, by opening the heavy metal outer door (it opens by itself) you will enter a small hallway. Six feet ahead and to the right is a second door—locked—and covered with fish-colored sheet metal. You knock and there is a slight inward give like rapping off the fender of a new Chevy.



Ken Rooks, a pioneer jazz collector, who has acquired most of Duke Ellington's rarest 78s, radio transcriptions, and V-disks, unbolts the door and says, 'Well, well. Look who's here—the MAN himself.' He spends one day a week (Saturday) helping assort, compile, stack, and bring logic to the permanent disorder inherent in 450,000 records.

Inside, two out-of-town collectors (looking like hardware store clerks) stand over a long table (there is a shortage of chairs)—bent down, peering down at what appear to be long type-written sheets with numbers and obscure symbols. They are "pop '20s" collectors (Bing, Rus, Gene A., Rudy). They wear gabardine brown slacks that merge into a thickening background of record shelves, and they barely glance up. Last Saturday it was the 'foresters': these are the out-of-town jazz collectors who with casual disdain for *The Spectacular New York Life* arrive wearing checked wool lumberman shirts

Straight ahead and beyond a locked door, another room, called the 'vault', contains wall to ceiling shelves of the rarest labels in the record collecting fraternity: Autograph (red or light blue with nautical checked border), Black Patti (purple with golden peacock that has a monstrous tail), Electrobeam Gennett (black with Old English lettering), Merrit (purple or black with agonized Greek death masks), Paramount (black, purple, blue; gold eagle holds the world in its TALONS), Champion (gold lettering—large red, or the even rarer small red, small yellow-orange, small black, small green labels), the 'lightning label' Brunswick 7000 series (lightning rods symbolize that marvel of the 1920's: electrical recording), the war-like Sears-Roebuck labels (Conqueror, Supertone, Challenge—heroic combatants pose with swords and shields), Vocalion 1000 series (non-glossy black and white), and the unissued tests. In this room is what the record collecting intrigue is all about—the music has to be good; beyond that, it is the label and how it LOOKS: the naive 1920's Cheltenham, Broadway, or Gaudy typefaces and 30-year old colors that would be too expensive to color-match and print today. No record in the room is worth less than \$15; many begin at \$40.

In the main room, Jacob S. Schneider, a lawyer for 40 years, sits behind a large desk next to the caged window. He wears a white shirt with short sleeves. His tie, suitcoat and hat are on an empty record shelf behind him. With a ballpoint pen he writes new titles, label numbers, and record conditions on legal-size stationery. On the desk, three piles of records are in precarious balance.

Ken Rooks checks through the thousands of early radio transcriptions in one of the 'underground caverns' adjoining the Hotel Endicott.

To the left, shelves, eight feet high, face each other and extend 25 feet. They are stacked with 78s in green and tan sleeves. Midway through one shelf, a narrow passageway opens into a large room with one lightbulb at the ceiling. In here, the shelves and darkness close in around you like the walls of the Egyptian catacomb reconstruction at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and dead end somewhere near the bathroom in the back.



Left to right: English blues collector Francis Smith, blues collector Don Kent from Chicago, and Jacob S. Schneider (moments before negotiations).

To moviegoers, Mr. Schneider might look like the late Sidney Greenstreet who went on a 60-day diet before stepping from the screen of *The Maltese Falcon* into real life. But the resemblance is superficial. As you approach his desk you meet a pair of blue eyes that first Russia in 1904 and perhaps reveal the humor in five decades of *New York Life* since then.

"I've been getting phone calls for you all day," Mr. Schneider says. "Please tell your creditors not to call me at my place of business."

He was born in Czarist Russia in 1904 at Lublin, an ancient Wendish city west of the Pripet Marshes, located midway between the Vistula and Bug Rivers and some 200 miles south of former German East Prussia. Lublin was traditionally Polish-speaking and the victim of countless Russian invasions and occupations since the 17th Century. It was finally regained by Poland after World War I and again after World War II. One of Mr. Schneider's earliest childhood memories was of the Cossacks brought into Lublin to enforce the Czar's "Progrum" against the Jewish population: "I was standing in front of our house when they were coming down the street—huge men on horseback with black mustaches and giant broadswords—slashing, hacking down at running people. Suddenly, they were all around. I looked up and this Cossack was bringing his sword down on my head when my Grandmother grabbed me from behind, pulled me inside the house, and bolted the door."

Often, you will enter 100 W. 82 in the midst of a recurring conversation about phonograph records. There are the same kind of 'professional' truisms you might hear around the racetracks ('always bet on the jockey, not the horse'), a boxing arena (kill the body and watch the head die'), or the lounge of a ball park ('he fields like a fat man trying to catch a bus'). Women seem out of place. The occasional female straggler or collector's wife is treated with the same monolithic deference and overpoliteness that Marine Master Sergeants reserve for civilian review boards. Except for Mr. Schneider. He reserves a philosophical side of himself for the opposite sex; he has the ability to view women versus phonograph records and the entire middle-class dilemma in what might be described as 'all from the outside'.

"Many collectors give up their collections after they get married," he says. "Wives do not want to share their husbands with old records. When half of your legal cases involve divorce suits, you learn these things." Mr. Schneider himself admits to several marriages.



Bernard Klatzko, the country blues collector, helps pinpoint some of the blues rarities.



Left to right: rock-singer 'The Incredible Tiny Tim', Jacob S. Schneider, and Dutch discographer Max Vreede.

His clientele are not all 'numbers men' who flip through the lists and spot the rarities by label numbers (Victor 23250 thru 23400's, Paramount 12900 thru 13156, Champion 16200 thru 16800's). Many, in fact, are not even interested in early music or record labels—like the lady from Stoatz, Iowa, who writes for Shirley Temple records "just to hear little Shirley's voice once again before I die."

The majority are like the man who wrote asking for a record made in 1924 of Nora Bayes singing *Some Sunny Day*. "The year my wife and I became engaged, we played that record over and over," he said. Mr. Schneider wrote back, "I have seven copies of it on Columbia in various conditions ranging from N to V-. You can have it in mint shape for \$2 or scratchy for 50¢."

Sometimes, bright young couples from Queens buzz over to buy THE HISTORIC arrangement of a Broadway hit on the original 1957 LP. "I don't handle LPs," Mr. Schneider says. "Try Woolworth's."

Among Mr. Schneider's regular customers were the late Paul Whiteman and Al Jolson (both seeking obscure recordings made by them before they became famous). Mr. Schneider was one of the last to see Jolson before his death in 1950 (when Jolson bought four of his own recordings on the 1917 Little Wonder label). Customers and visitors have included the English jazz discographer and publisher, Brian Rust and the French jazz critic, Hughes Panassie. Each spent a week researching through Mr. Schneider's 450,000 records. Overseas visitors in 1967 have been the Dutch discographer, Max Vreede, and the English cartoonist and country blues collector, Francis Smith.



Three stunners: a jug band rarity on late black-label Champion 16,000 series; a jazz band rarity on the obscure Gennett subsidiary label—Superior; and one of the few recordings of Negro minstrel music.

What are the highest values? Mr. Schneider estimates that one jazz record he sold 15 years ago (*Zulu's Ball*, Gennett 5275 by King Oliver and His Creole Jazz Band) is worth over \$200. "It is one of two known copies," he said. Ten years ago, a Jelly Roll Morton on Autograph in E condition was clocked out of Mr. Schneider's collection at \$125. But prices have gone up since then. He believes that a copy of Hoagy Carmichael's *Stardust* on Gennett 6311 would bring well over that today.

Some country blues records have already nudged past the \$70 mark (Charlie Patton, Skip James, and Son House on the rare Paramount 12900 thru 13100 series). Since 1963 they have been edging the more stable jazz rarities. White country-hillbilly values are still far behind; but moving up quickly to the \$35 bracket are country string bands on late Champion

16000 series and Superior, choice groups on Electrobeam Gennett and Herwin 75000 series, and single rarities such as Gene Autrey on Columbia 15000's or QRS. One source of information states that the highest values are on the few really rare operatics, such as the turn-of-the-century Caruso Zonophones, which can bring as much as \$500. ("How do you recognize a rare operatic? It's simple," says one operatic collector. "If the record is one-sided, its diameter smaller than ten inches, and the singer has an Italian name—you know you've got something.") But when asked how blues or jazz collectors can dispose of an occasional rare operatic that might be picked up canvassing, Mr. Schneider commented, "I for one would like to know where all these 'operatic collectors' are. I have over 15,000 pre-World War I operatics gathering dust, attracting moths."

What is it like to own 450,000 records? Mr. Schneider himself has appeared on TV and radio to answer this question, and he has been the subject of articles in the *Herald Tribune Sunday Magazine*, *Coronet*, *Hi-Fi Review*, *Hi-Fi Guide*, and *Music Views*. Often, TV or radio producers drop over to borrow historic jazz, opera, or 'personality' records when they need them for shows. Both Columbia Records and RCA Victor, when they embarked on reissue programs, have borrowed from Mr. Schneider's collection.

Mr. Schneider's most productive years in acquiring records were probably during the 1950's. It was still possible to find mint record stocks—if you searched. Spurred by the final decadence of 'Dixieland', many jazz collectors were selling out (claiming that 78 bootleg reissues had brought the values down and that they no longer needed the originals to hear the music).

The Jazz Revival Generation settled down, got married, and stopped nightclubbing at Nick's, Ryan's, and Condon's. During Francis Wolfe's famous auctions in the 1953-1954 *Record Changer* (under pseudonyms such as 'Harold Lang', 'Francis Bickford'), the choice jazz and blues rarities failed to make their minimum bids and had to be reauctioned under pseudonyms.

The 1950's divided 78 record collectors and the Jazz Revival Generation. By 1957, The Record Changer itself had gone out of business. For the few, it was a buyer's market.

One of the hazards of owning 450 thousand records is theft. "There was something odd about this fellow," Mr. Schneider said. "It was the middle of summer and he wore this heavy overcoat. He'd come in and ask everybody if they wanted containers of coffee and he would go out and bring back the containers. He would make as many as five trips out for coffee. It never dawned on me—until it was too late, of course. What he did was this—he'd go back behind the shelves and grab 30 or 40 (they had to be mint) when nobody was looking. He had an oversize belt. He'd open his belt and put them in the small of his back, then button up his overcoat and go out for coffee. It had been going on for weeks. It's funny...people who wouldn't think of stealing money, will steal records."

In 1954, during the shocking aftermath of this major theft and for several months after that, Mr. Schneider could be seen absentmindedly patting visitors on the back while they were making their farewells. "Ultimately, I recovered most of the records...but the mental anguish..."

In a statement specially prepared for 78 Quarterly, Mr. Schneider says: "WARNING—I've had crooks come in and take records from my various establishments, but I hereby notify the world that next to me is a tremendous empty lot, taken by the city, for the purpose of building the biggest police station in New York (therefore, if I've been guilty of anything previously, I must now, of necessity, reform.)"



In the 'vault' room, Max Vreede and Jacob S. Schneider rest after doggedly checking a straight run of some 150 Paramounts.



Last-minute negotiations in the back room.

Another problem in owning 450,000 records has been storage. Like many professional and business men in New York's Upper West Side, he has been a leading opponent and victim of 'city planners' and 'architects-of-the-future.' Especially noteworthy have been the City's building inspectors.

"In 1922 when I became a lawyer, I moved to an office at 128 West 66th Street. It had six rooms on the street floor. The first three rooms in front were my office and eventually the rear three rooms were jammed up to the ceiling with records. A mouse couldn't get through. If an inspector ever saw it, he would have condemned the building.

"Everytime an inspector came, I said, 'She's not in today.' I had told him, 'the lady who has the back three rooms—works.' Unfortunately, the floors of the back three room had begun to bulge and cave downwards. If a couple of inspectors were to come in those rooms at one time, everything would have gone down into the cellar.

"By 1954, I heard rumors about the whole neighborhood being condemned to make way for Lincoln Square Center. I had 200,000 records at the time. I reacted fast and luckily I found a building at 109 West 83rd Street. I hired a large truck and six or seven bums from the neighborhood. They worked under the direction of my son-in-law (incidentally, quite a bum himself), and we carted everything over and put it in the cellar.



1928: Jacob S. Schneider (far right)—as a young lawyer and three companions wait outside the old Ebbetts Field ballpark at Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn. That was the year Dodger fans grew special mustaches because pitcher Babe Herman had a long winning streak going. Bets were taken, and the rules were that nobody could shave until Herman lost.

"I was at West 83rd Street, accumulating more records. I was at peace with the world and with myself—until 1962. It was in 1962 that lightning struck again. We were ordered out by city officials—they wanted to build more schools to keep the bums in the neighborhood off the streets. What did I do about it? I wanted to throw in the sponge. Where (the hell) was I going to store 450,000 records?

"GOD sent a client my way. The client told me about the old ballroom of the Endicott Hotel at West 83rd Street, where I now am. I ran over and signed a ten-year lease (it had been closed for years). Then I got estimates on taking down the shelves, building new shelves, and hauling all the records over to the ballroom. The estimates were astronomical.

"So I looked up another former client (God rest his soul), a talented carpenter and a lush. All I had to do was to keep him sober. Instead of my hiring a truck, the carpenter built five dollies. He hired ten bums in the neighborhood and they

were put under the supervision of my son-in-law (who by this time had become a bigger bum).

"Then came the unbelievable job of carrying, lifting, setting down, and filing hundreds of thousands of records. The carpenter and his assistants tore down the shelves in the old place and erected them in the new place. We began moving the records—from shelves to floor to dollies to floor back to shelves. Thus, the story went on: we went out into the desert to pick up one grain of sand...until the job was finished—after five months, 37 bums, and 1155 trips to the carpenter's house (to awaken him from drunken stupors). It cost \$5000 and 3708 broken records (many were choice rarities).

"The building where I'm now at is in the same old bad neighborhood. Recently, I purchased ear plugs—for the moment when city officials call me up to say this building is going down. In the meantime, I've gotten enormous amounts of publicity and I'm proud to say I have the biggest collection of 78s in the world."

SYD VALENTINE

By DUNCAN SCHIEDT



SYD VALENTINE's PATENT LEATHER KIDS in 1929. Left to right: Raymond (Syd) Valentine, trumpet; James Helms, piano; Paul George, banjo.

the fascinating details of Indiana's greatest trumpet player...

JONAH JONES leaned back in the soft chair of his hotel room and said, '...while we're on the subject of trumpet players, you know, one of the best of them all came out of this very town - know who I mean?' Seeing my negative shake of the head, he continued, 'Name of Valentine - Raymond Valentine.'

SYD VALENTINE, ALREADY A LEGEND AMONG MUSICIANS, HAD BECOME A LEGEND AMONG RECORD COLLECTORS WITH HIS SKILLET DICK CHAMPIONS ...and now his REDISCOVERY

OF COURSE, the name was not new to me. For some time I had been aware of the tall, slim trumpet player: I met him two or three years before at Scrapper Blackwell's place, and he was then playing in a small combo at the Stage Door Bar on South Illinois Street, Indianapolis, on the site of the old Mutual Burlesque Theatre. Syd (I knew him by his local nickname) was a man whose prowess was always mentioned by other veteran Indianapolis musicians, but when the likes of Jonah Jones volunteered his praise, I was impressed. Up to this time I hadn't thought about his possible impact on the jazz fraternity outside of Indianapolis. I knew that he had made Gennett records in the late 1920's over in Richmond, and was in fact the Skillet Dick on Champion records released from that session. Syd himself was not even aware of this alias used by the recording company until collectors Fred Cox and Jim Lindsay had him up to play some of the old sides.

SO I HIT the research trail again to explore a byway of the largely unexplored world of Midwestern territory bands of the 1920's and 1930's. And with Syd's more than willing cooperation, the following is a sketch of his career.

RAYMOND VALENTINE was born in November, 1908, in the Hoosier capitol. During his early teens he took a job as usher at the colored movie and vaudeville theatre, the Washington, on Indiana, long since demolished. He was interested in brass instruments and found an ideal mentor in the formidable leader of the theatre's house band, Frank Clay. Clay, who had been associated with the theatre since before World War I, was known locally as the 'Black Sousa'. He was sought after by many nationally known leaders, but steadfastly refused to leave Indianapolis. Clay preferred the security of his theatre job, and good bookings as lead cornet with with Reginald DuValle, Indianapolis' first-string Negro bandleader and holder of profitable hotel and club jobs. It was Clay's reputation as an outstanding teacher, however, that drew Syd to the man. Lessons took place at one O'clock each Sunday at the Masonic Hall, just before the Washington pit band rehearsal. One could hardly imagine a better teacher considering the direction Syd's career was to take in later years. Command of his instrument, impeccable tone, and, importantly, fast reading were demanded of the young pupil.

THE WASHINGTON THEATRE was a small but regular link in the old T.O.B.A. vaudeville circuit; it played host to some of the greatest colored acts in the nation. Singers, dancers, comedy teams, blackface minstrels, legitimate actors, trick instrumentalists and others paraded across the stage accompanied by a small but lusty pit band, and this was augmented in many cases by key musicians who traveled with each particular show.

AFTER THEATRE closing, the young usher's musical appetite was further stimulated by going across the street to the Golden West Cafe, where the pick of the local musicians and singers held forth. Frank Clay himself doubled at this spot, playing the lead in the small house band. Regular fixtures at this second-floor spot were pianist Jesse Crump, blues singer Nina Reeves and, for a time, Montana Taylor, the barrelhouse pianist who was later to be based in Detroit.

SYD DEVELOPED fast on his instrument and was soon sitting in at sessions with some of the veteran musicians in town — men like pianist James Helms, known as 'Slick', and banjoist Paul George. Both later appeared with Syd on record in the Skillet Dick session for Gennett. The entire recorded output of this group, including accompaniments to Hattie Snow, a blues singer from Indianapolis, was made in one day. And for the work each man received \$20. On Gennett Electrobeam labels the band was known as Syd Valentine and His Patent Leather Kids. The Skillet Dick and His Frying Pans appellation was a figment of the Gennett minds in Richmond for the cheaper Champion issues.

ANOTHER PIANIST with whom Syd came into contact was Fred Wisdom, who had his own small band, the Merrymakers. When Wisdom, Syd and others were offered a chance to join a show in California, they decided to try out their limited reputation. They headed west, hoping to make the West Coast and back. They managed a few gigs and got as far as Kansas City, where they met a young alto sax player named Eddie Barefield. His talent was such, that they were on the verge of taking him along, when his mother intervened. Barefield was so impressed by Syd's playing at this time that, he recalled the incident in a 1961 interview with Frank Driggs, in one of the last issues of JAZZ REVIEW magazine. He described Valentine as 'terrific.'

THE MUSICIANS never got any further west. They straggled back to Indianapolis Syd's next venture was in Terre Haute with the territory band of Paul Stewart. The history of this band at the time was

quite interesting. Just before Syd's arrival the band featured the three Reeves brothers, Gerald on trombone, Bob on bass and the sensational Reuben on trumpet. Reuben Reeves had just departed for Chicago and the bands led by Erskine Tate, Dave Peyton at the Regal, and finally the Missourians (later to become Cab Calloway's band). Reeves made a series of records with Tate musicians in these early years, rare collectors' items now, but at the time, startlingly new to his fellow musicians.

A FAMOUS member of Paul Stewart's Wee Hour Serenaders remained, however, and was probably the first big-time musician that Syd had come up against. This was the well-known Chicago clarinetist Jimmy O'Bryant, veteran of many Paramount recordings and already beginning to go into eclipse. To keep the Chicagoan happy, Stewart, as leader, was obligated to provide O'Bryant with a bottle of whiskey each evening. Young Syd was rather non-plussed by this gesture. But his spirits were given a sky-high lift when, after hearing Valentine play, O'Bryant exclaimed, 'Slim, you sound just like ol' Tommy Ladnier!'



Champion label—recorded October 2, 1929, Richmond, Indiana. On this label, Hattie Snow becomes 'Helen Harris' and Syd Valentine & His Patent Leather Kids become 'Skillet Dick & His Frying Pans'.

THE ENGAGEMENT with Stewart lasted quite a while, and Syd enrolled and finished his education at a Terre Haute high school while with the band. After

returning to Indianapolis, he went from the Washington Theatre out on his first show. He was hired to accompany the show 'Jigfield Follies', starring comic Billie Mitchel and featuring clarinetist Wilton Crawley. This experience took him as far east as New York.



Gennett label—recorded October 2, 1929, Richmond, Ind. Band name shortened to 'Patent Leather Kids'.

NOT LONG afterwards, Syd decided that he could risk setting up a band of his own. With the assistance of Indianapolis' Logan Brown, a saxophonist, who became business manager, he formed his Patent Leather Kids, a ten-piece outfit, the style of the day. The personnel was as follows:

Trumpets: Syd Valentine, Leroy Hardy; **Trombone:** Wheeler Moran; **Alto Saxes:** Logan Brown, Cleve Bottoms; **Tenor Sax:** Henry Woods; **Piano:** Fred Wisdom; **Banjo:** Clarence (Gus) Hardy; **Tuba:** Bert Summers.

OF INTEREST is the trombonist, Wheeler Moran. This musician, who Syd brought out of Muncie, Indiana, later became known as Doc Wheeler. He was to lead the Sunset Royals in New York, one of the most famous bands of the Swing Era. But, for some years to come, he would still be known as Wheeler Moran, and he would operate in the Midwest.

ONE NIGHT in 1928, while Syd's band was playing in the old Rainbow Palm Gardens on Indiana Avenue, the Milwaukee-based leader, Bernie Young, then making an appearance at the Indiana Roof, chanced to hear him playing. Young asked Syd to come over and sit in with his band. Syd gladly complied and was asked if he would like to join the Young band and return with it to Wisconsin. Syd agreed, but only if his buddy Wheeler Moran could be taken along too.

THIS WAS agreeable to Young. Giving the helm of the band over to Cleve Bottoms and Henry Woods, Syd and the trombonist entrained for Milwaukee, where Young was enlarging his band for work at the Wisconsin Roof. In the next few years Bernie Young was to become as much of an attraction at the Indiana Roof in Indianapolis as he had been in the Lake Michigan area. This was because he worked both 'Roofs' on an exchange agreement between the two Devine brothers who operated the two dance places: George in Milwaukee and Tom in Indianapolis.

MORE STAR talent was to be found in this band. Already on trombone was the New Orleanian Preston Jackson. On saxes were Ed Inge, Bert Bailey and Syd's admirer, Eddie Barefield, fresh out of the Southwest and working the Wisconsin area with bands like Young's and Elie Rice's. On drums was the son of leader Rice, Sylvester Rice. The other trumpet man in addition to Syd and Young was Z. (for Zilmer) T. Randolph, out of Arkansas, and at 29, already a talented arranger; in the 1930's, he composed 'Old Man Mose', for the Louis Armstrong band. A veteran of the Mississippi riverboats, B.T. Lovinggood, filled the piano chair. The bass player was Winston Walker.

MUCH VALUABLE experience now followed for Syd. Young's jobs were among the best around, and a well rounded repertoire kept

the musicians humping to learn the new music as it came along. But where were periods of layoff when the larger band was not needed, and Syd began to make his headquarters in Chicago. Here, State Street was still the jazz capitol of the world, though shortly to give way to Harlem. The Savoy Ballroom housed two bands, simultaneously: it featured Louis Armstrong with the Carroll Dickerson band at one end; the Clarence Black band, starring the mighty Jabbo Smith, alternated across the dance floor. It was into the Dickerson band that Syd was able to fit on some occasions and at other times he gigged with Jabbo Smith, Bob Shoffner (in Jimmy Bell's band) and the Jelly Roll Morton trumpet man; George Mitchell, whom he today recalls as 'Little Mitch'. The great jazz boom in Chicago remains a vivid memory to Syd today. Never before or since had he seen so much work for so many musicians.

IN LATE 1928 Syd went back to Indianapolis briefly. Then, with altoist Cleve Bottoms, who had reorganized the old Patent Leather Kids as the Brown Buddies, he took off for Columbus in response to an offer from Horace Henderson, who was reorganizing a new band. Henderson's band, the Wilberforce Collegians, although originally made up of students from Ohio's Wilberforce College, had now lost its star sidemen Rex Stewart and Benny Carter. So once again Syd was to replace an illustrious musician (Rex Stewart). Cleve Bottoms, properly impressed, filled the Carter saxophone chair. Other musicians in this band were Cleo (Dad) Good on tenor, Van Sherill on alto, Matt (Red) Harlan and Bernice (Sprat) Morton on trumpets, Luke Stewart guitarist, Sylvester Turpin, bass and Horace Henderson, piano.

'REHEARSING this band was like having a regular day job' recalls Syd. In fact, they were building a new band and, with many of the men from the Louisville area, it was truly a Midwestern band. The dems

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HARDY BROS. handbill featuring Raymond (Syd) Valentine.

demands on musicianship were even more stringent than during Syd's Bernie Young period: Horace had already shown his talent for section arranging, and it was to bring him recognition almost equal to his older brother Fletcher.

FINALLY, THE band was ready and left Columbus for the road. Early in the schedule, there was a booking in Pittsburgh, and Horace Henderson found a young trumpeter who gladdened his heart — to the point where he dropped 'Sprat' Morton to make room for the newcomer: Roy Eldridge. Up to then, Roy's experience had been largely with carnivals, followed by a short try as leader of his own combo in his home town.

ROY BROUGHT a rather battered instrument with him into the Henderson band, which Horace looked on with obvious distaste. For appearance's sake, Eldridge was shortly presented with a new instrument, and the 18-year-old trumpeter fidgeted with the horn as he sat up on the stand. The first time out, Roy obediently sat beside the other two, playing in section with the bright trumpet. But, as the time drew near for a solo break, he reached down like a golfer for his favorite putter to the old instrument. When he stood up to play a hot bar or two, there, for all to see, including the leader, was Old Faithful! Horace gave up gracefully.

CAREER REACHES NEW PEAK BY 1929...

BY NOW Syd was reaching the peak of his powers and building a fine reputation throughout jazzdom. He recalls that in the Henderson band, the trumpet men would alternate parts; Syd played first or second horn, while Roy remained the "ride" or "get-off" man in third position. The first trumpet part was the melody lead; the second man usually took specialty solos, often with mute and growl tones. In this band they could wear out a first trumpet man. Thus, parts were switched for relief.

At this point, around 1929, Syd's career took a new tack, one that his early experience in the Washington Theatre had foreshadowed. He became lead trumpet with a famous show band—the Hardy Bros. band, out of Virginia. This organization, led by trumpeter Wes and altoist Henry Hardy, was made up largely of musicians from Richmond. It was prominent as a pit band in the Eastern Circuit and played theatres from the Howard in Washington, the Pearl and Lincoln in Philadelphia, the Lafayette in New York, through to houses in Boston and Providence in New England.

THE BAND'S ROUTINE was to rehearse a show, accompany it out on the road for a tour, after which, it would resume its regular pit job. In the case of the Hardys, it usually was the Howard Theatre. During Syd's tenure, such well-known musicians as Sid Catlett (briefly) and Trummy Young, fresh from the Washington band of pianist Booker Coleman, passed through this band. Also in the band was a trick trombonist, Sylvester Briscoe, who played in crouched positions on the stage and shared a "patent" with Jack Teagarden on the stunt of dismantling his instrument as he played. The musical "brains" of the band was the pianist-arranger Coleridge Davis, who eventually got around to writing the shows that the band played in. Syd recalls the "old man" of the outfit, bassist Leven H. Hill, who was a steady influence on the young bloods of the band, and Chester Brown, a gifted guitarist from Washington who died before coming to deserved fame.

It was with the interesting and inadequately documented band led by the Hardy Bros. that Syd was to work for the next few years. He made intermittent departures to join big bands of the day, such as Lucky Millinder, Earl Hines and Tiny Bradshaw, but it is a tribute to Valentine's ability that he could always find a berth with the Hardys whenever he wanted. During one of Syd's layoffs (self-imposed), Horace Henderson took the Hardys and fronted them into the Washington Theatre in Indianapolis, playing the show "Sugar Cane." The show was written by the band's pianist, Coleridge Davis, and starred singer Geneva Washington and comics "Pigmeat" Markham and "Socks" Jenkins. Syd's replacement at this time was young Jonah Jones, barely two years out of home in Louisville, Ky.

SYD TRANSFERRED back and forth between bands so often those days that he has trouble recalling with whom or when he played, but by careful calculation and cross-checking, it is possible to approximate his stays with at least the major ones. For a few months, around the end of 1929 and into 1930, he worked with the almost legendary Speed Webb band, which was riding a crest of publicity gained from being the first Negro band to make Hollywood feature films. During Syd's tenure, the Webb band was at its peak. Roy Eldridge and his brother Joe, Teddy and Gus Wilson, Reunald Jones, and Vic Dickenson were all sidemen at once. By this time, Roy had become the man to whom many of the young trumpeters were listening, even though, as far as the public was concerned, he did not yet have a great reputation. His brilliant flights,

cast in the Armstrong mold, were the inspiration and exasperation of section mates like Reunald Jones, whose abilities lay in more mundane areas like dependability and precise timing, but who, within the band, constrained to do battle musically with the brash young horn man from Pittsburgh. This was not the Speed Webb band of Hollywood fame; nevertheless, it seems to have been the greatest one under that leader. To a man, its alumni compared in impact with the later Count Basie band.

Also about 1930, Syd played second trumpet with Lucky Millinder's original band, largely made up of ex-Walter Barnes men. Later in the 1930's a subsequent Barnes band was the victim of a holocaust in a southern dance hall and, as is well-known in jazz lore, was literally burned up. The original Barnes band, under Millinder's leadership, had included the famous Chicagoan Guy Kelly. Kelly was fired, and this made the opening which Valentine was to fill. This band also included, as Syd recalls, "Scoops" Carey on sax, the man who was later to play a part in the bop movement by recommending Charlie Parker to Earl Hines in 1943.

BACK AND FORTH from the Hardy Bros. to other jobs traveled the itinerant Valentine, seemingly unwilling to settle down with one organization for long. One time, while he was ill in D.C., the Hardy Bros. band went off on tour without him, and he joined a band led by Cab Calloway's younger brother, Elmer. This band played the Club Prudhom, known later as the Cotton Club. One sideman was trombonist Fred Norman, soon to join the Claude Hopkins band as arranger. Syd recalls that most of the men in this band were students at Howard University, playing at night to earn their tuition.

FINALLY, in the mid-1930's, Syd married a girl from the New York area who had been a dancer in one of the shows, and the Valentines settled for some time in Brooklyn. From this base Syd was able to play gigs with many of the New York greats. This period, at the depth of the depression, was so uncertain that a recounting of the various jobs and connections held by the musicians would be almost impossible.

He served his next long-term hitch in 1937, with Irving Miller's Brownskin Models, a show which took him far afield, and into the Texas area. In this band was the veteran drummer Cuba Austin, rhythm mainstay of the old McKinney's Cotton Pickers.

DURING THE LATE 1930's, Syd's career took a decided dip. He had left the big bands behind, and was out working in smaller combos and lesser known outfits in such places as Muskegon and Grand Rapids, Michigan. At the onset of World War II and after many years' absence, he decided to return to Indianapolis to await possible induction, wanting to go in from his own home area. While here, he remained top thread among the local musicians.

Syd was still a man of repute among trumpeters in big bands visiting the Sunset Terrace Ballroom and the stage shows at the Lyric Theatre, where most of the swing era bands now appeared. He recalls one memorable all-night battle with Fats Waller's sizzling horn ace, Johnny "Bugs" Hamilton. Hamilton had come over to the Hollywood, which was the later name for the old Golden West Cafe. Syd doesn't say who came out on top, but it is safe to say that a lot of good rang out over Indiana Avenue that night.



Elmer Calloway Band from the early 1930's: Saxes—Robert Smith, Ray Smith, John Harris. Trumpets—Lester Henry, Robert Woodlin, Syd Valentine (right end). Piano—(unknown). Drums—Percy Johnson. Bass—Al Stewart. Accordion—(?) Bowen. Trombone—Fred Norman.

For a time, too, Syd worked at the Grand Terrace for Earl Hines, filling in for Charlie Allen, the regular trumpet man, then out with a bad lip. He also recalls a rather brief engagement at the Club Astoria in Baltimore, under the baton of Tiny Bradshaw.

from the collection of Duncan Schiedt

SINCE THOSE DAYS, Syd has kept playing, although intermittently. The layoffs are longer than he would wish, but he still preserves his hard-learned control and tone. "Trumpet men aren't in such great demand today. The tenor men have taken over," he says with resignation. But when he does work, he can mute the horn down to cocktail lounge smoothness, and some of the old swagger comes through in spite of the surroundings. His current plan to form a Dixie outfit would seem to be a little out of character for this swing era trumpeter, but might be a smart switch, nevertheless. His biggest problem would seem to be finding the right pianist and front line men to do a good job on this traditional form. Like Buck Clayton, Pee Wee Russell, Rex Stewart and Vic Dickenson, to name a few that come readily to mind, Syd belongs to no one style, yet belongs to all styles. A musical lifetime of varied fare has given him an irreplaceable background and feel for all forms of jazz, from the somewhat primitive type exemplified by the Skillet Dick sides to the fast-moving swing form of the Horace Henderson and Speed Webb bands, and over all, the leavening influence of the kind of show music demanded of the lead trumpeter of the Hardy Bros. band. If Syd's career gets going again in a berth of his own choosing, Indianapolis will be musically a much richer town.

(The above story of the legendary Syd Valentine originally appeared in Vol. VII, No. 5ns of JAZZ NOTES)

The "CONSPIRACY" Against CHARLEY JORDAN—?

By BERNARD KLATZKO

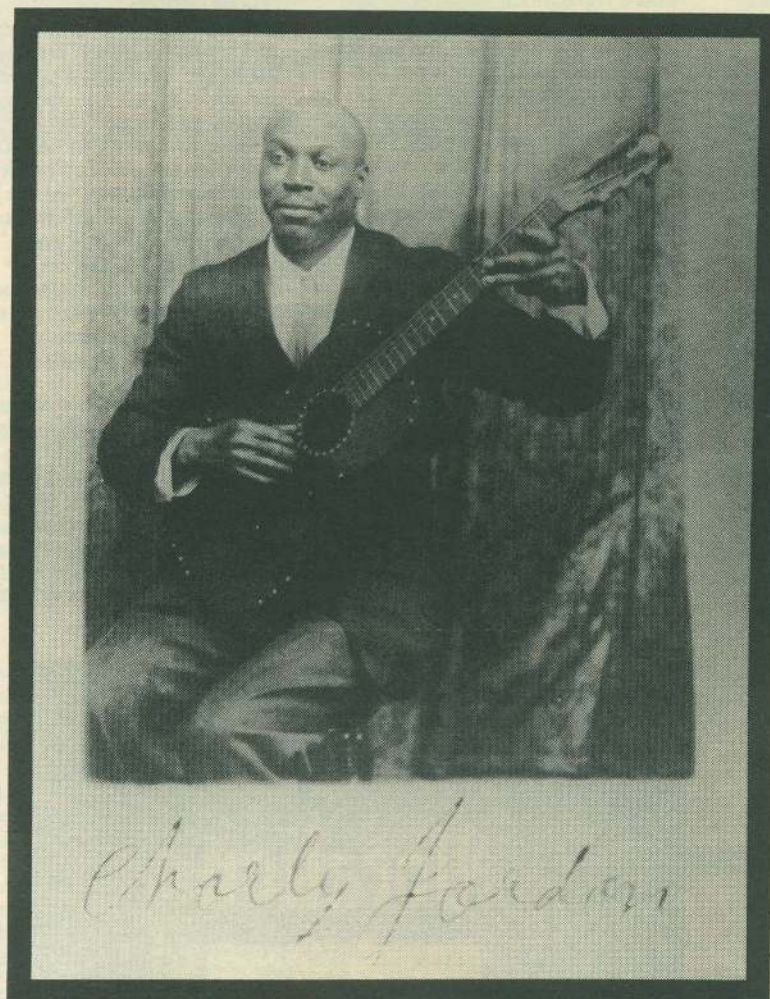


photo courtesy of Lawrence Cohn & Frank Driggs

**CHARLEY JORDAN IN
THE EARLY 1930's...**

**SOMETIMES
THE
CONSPIRACY
OF SILENCE
IS ALL THE
DEADLIER**

Charlie Jordan made too many good records and had too much going for him that he should be the victim of a fade-away. In June, 1930, Jordan entered the Brunswick Blake Collendar Company recording studios in Chicago and cut eight sides. At least five stamp him as 'interesting' and 'provocative'. Reportedly from Memphis, Jordan shows strong affinities to this 'north-of-the-Delta' style in his voice and three-finger guitar picking.

His tenor voice is light—almost conversational. Lacking the shocking vocal hypnosis (the innate willingness of a singer to project entirely outside of himself) of a Delta performer like Son House or Charlie Patton, his effectiveness comes from inexact timing (that is exact), a oneness of guitar and voice, and an anticipating rhythm (accented off-beats and delayed grace notes are only part of the story). All of this 'order out of disorder', 'harmony from disharmony' occur on three sides: *Keep It Clean* on Vocalion 1511 (re-issued on Origin, OJL-8), *Just A Spoonful* on Vocalion 1543, and *Hunkie Tunkie Blues*, Vocalion 1528.

Of the three, I prefer *Just A Spoonful*. Jordan produces the same swing as a similar but earlier Paramount recording by Charlie Patton ('they ALL played ragtime'). *Keep It Clean* is, frankly, just as good. It's probably Jordan's favorite and most positive melodic theme. As an original creation (and despite the fact that it may somehow have inspired a singing commercial type pop tune of the 1940's called *Personality*), *Keep It Clean* is probably his most important contribution to the Tradition.

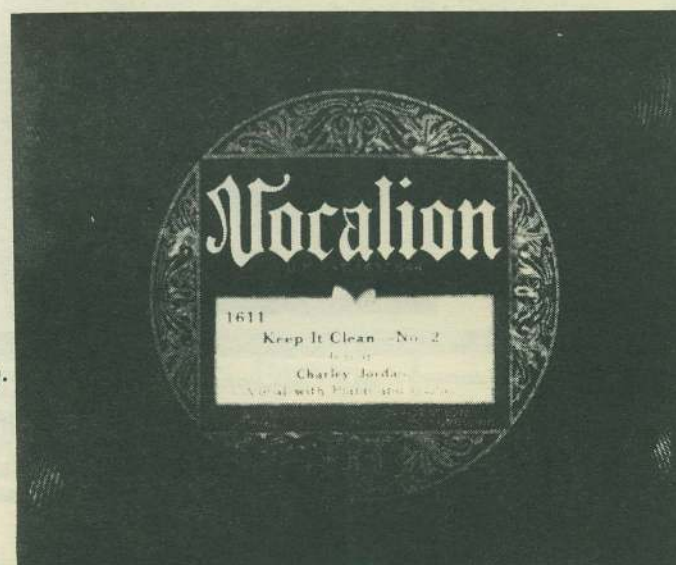
Hunkie Tunkie Blues takes its place right along with the other two: voice and guitar burst from a suppressed intensity and double-time, hold back, then burst out—again and again.

Honorable mention goes to *Stack O' Dollars Blues*. Melodically, it resembles *Keep It Clean*, but is less positive, less humorous, more introverted and underkeyed. *Dollar Bill Blues* is similar to a Leadbelly piece—*Little Children's Blues*—but nothing else that's been recorded. Jordan's performance is touching, but doesn't reach the effectiveness of the top three because of unresolved rhythmic problems.

Big Four Blues, *Two Street Blues* and *Raidin' Squad* round out Jordan's first session. These three follow the familiar AAB blues form (except for an

unusual breakout halfway through *Raidin' Squad*). By comparison with *Spoonful*, *Keep It Clean*, and *Hunkie Tunkie*, they are lukewarm servings. Although Jordan's singing is remote, his hard-to-play guitar in Standard Tuning continues to be interesting (and superior to much of his work in later sessions). I know that quite a few blues listeners regard as 'great' much lesser recordings by singers such as Tampa Red or many of the low-key, disembodied performances by Blind Lemon Jefferson.

Raidin' Squad is another song that was possibly adopted by Leadbelly (almost note for note) in *T.B. Blues*, Bluebird 8559, June 15, 1940. (Had Leadbelly somehow managed to smuggle his outstanding collection of mint Jordan Vocalions past the stolid guards at Angola Prison?)



courtesy of Bernard Klutsko

Jordan's rare second version of his most famous release, "Keep It Clean No. 2" was recorded in Chicago, March, 1931.



photo courtesy of Lawrence Cohn

Could Leadbelly (second from left) have smuggled his collection of Jordan Vocalions past the warden (far right) of Angola Prison during the early 1930's?

The discographical breakdown in *Blues & Gospel Records—1902 to 1942* by Dixon and Godrich shows that Jordan recorded copiously. *Keep It Clean*—No. 2 on Vocalion 1611 (March, 1931) is a worthy near-replica of the original, and *You Run And Tell Your Daddy* (the other side) has stunning piano accompaniment by Peetie Wheatstraw (usually a less-than-stunning performer).

Jordan's most promising 'unheard' performances may be on those 'all-time Depression loser' Victor 23300 sides (four).

Ironically, although Jordan recorded some 53 sides under his own name, the records that may draw the most listeners and the most raves are six obscure 1932 recordings by the virtually unknown Hi Henry Brown. The driving gear-teeth-mesh, two-guitar accompaniment by Jordan and Brown behind Brown's broken, pleading voice—and suddenly you're listening to performances at the summit (i.e., Patton's *Dry Well Blues*, James' *I'm So Glad*, Harris' *Bullfrog Blues*—and now, Hi Henry Brown's *Skin Man* or *Preacher Blues*). Our man Jordan is there too—with his big guitar, anticipating, 'force-feeding,' and generally moving things from side to side.

Keep It Clean

*I went to the river
I couldn't get across
I jumped on your papa
'Cause I thought he was a horse*

*Now, roll him over
Give him Co-Coly
Lemon Sody
Quart of ice cream
Take soap and water
For to keep it clean*

*Up she jumped
Down she fell
Her mouth flew open
Like a mussel shell*

*Now roll him over
Give him Co-Coly
Lemon sody
Quart of ice cream
Take soap and water
For to keep it clean*

*Your sister was a teddy
Your dady was a bear
Put a muzzle on your mama
'Cause she had bad hair*

*Now roll him over
Give him Co-Coly
Lemon sody
Quart of ice cream
Take soap and water
For to keep it clean*

*If you want to hear
That elephant laugh
Take him down to the river
And wash his yas, yas, yas*

*Now roll him over
Give him Co-Coly
Lemon sody
Quart of ice cream
Take soap and water
For to keep it clean*

*If you want to go to heaven
When you D-I-E
You got to put on your collar
And your T-I-E*

*Now roll him over
Give him Co-Coly
Lemon sody
Quart of ice cream
Take soap and water
For to keep it clean*

*If you want to get the rabbits
out of the L-O-G
You've got put on the stump
Like a D-O-G*

*Now roll him over
Give him Co-Coly
Lemon sody
Quart of ice cream
Take soap and water
For to keep it clean*

*Run here doctor
Run here fast
See what's the matter
With his yas, yas, yas*

*Now roll him over
Give him Co-Coly
Lemon sody
Quart of ice cream
Take soap and water
For to keep it clean*

WHAT'S IN THE GOLIATH
SECOND ISSUE OF 78
QUARTERLY...the Black-
birds of Paradise; 78 pres-
ents the Rarest 78s—Part 2;
Winston Holmes, Merrit label
and the Kimbroughs; the
Jackson, Miss. Blues Singers;
Son House Interview—Part 2;
Henry Stuckey: An Obituary;
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—photo Mary McCormick



Robert Shaw: "All them other boys I ran with are dead now. Black Boy Shine, Connie Burks, Roadhouse, Lazy Daddy. Booze and staying out in them joints killed them off. And the juke box took their jobs. I ain't heard nothing of Andy Boy or Rob Cooper or any of them others in years now. Last one still around Houston was Buster Pickens and he got shot to death on West Dallas Street—right in one of the old hang outs where we all used to be around—just two years ago. Me, I'm still playing piano, but not for a living. I'm selling groceries in Austin, making barbecue for these folks..."

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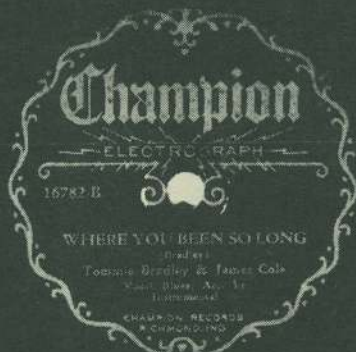
not
to mention

being a lot of good,
bawdy fun to hear
such romping stuff
(‘Put Me In The
Alley’ and ‘Whores
Is Funky’ and ‘The
Ma Grinder’ and
7 more) rapped out
by one of the professors
who used to shout

**"Squat low,
mama..."**

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with A to B...gives
known (or estimated)
number of copies
owned by collectors.



Garfield Akers Cottonfield Blues-Part 1/
-Part 2-Vocalion 1442 (5 known copies from
V- to N and one Decca test of Part 2) **Gar-**
field Akers Dough Roller Blues/Jumpin'
and Shoutin' Blues-Vocalion 1481 (2 known
copies, both E or better) **Kid Bailey** Miss-
issippi Bottom Blues/Roudy Blues-Brun-
swick 7114 (5 known copies, all E or better)
Willie Baker Weak-Minded Blues/Sweet
Petunia Blues-Gennett 6751 (one known copy
N-) **Willie Baker** Mama, Don't Rush Me Blues
/No No Blues-Gennett 6766 (one known copy
G) **Willie Baker** Bad Luck Moan/Ain't It A
Good Thing?-Gennett 6812 (no known copies)
Willie Baker Crooked Woman Blues/Rag Baby
-Gennett 6846 (no known copies) **Barefoot**
Bill Barefoot 'Bill's Hardluck Blues/One
More Time-Columbia 14561 (possibly two copies
- one is V+) **Wiley Barner** My Gal Treats Me
Mean/If You Want A Good Woman-Gennett 6261
(three known copies) **Willie Barnes** (Wiley Bar-
ner) My Gal Treats Me Mean-Champion 15378
(one known copy, V+) **Silvertone** 5121 (two
known copies, V- and E) **Lottie Beaman** Going
Away Blues/Rollin' Log Blues-Brunswick
7141 (two known copies, E+ and N) **Bill and**
Slim Papa's Gettin' Hot-Champion 16015
(one known copy, V-) **Scrapper Blackwell**
Springtime Blues-Gennett 7158 (no known
copies) **Scrapper Blackwell** Springtime Blues
-Champion 15973 (no known copies) **Scrap-**
per blackwell Hard Time Blues/Back Door
Blues-Champion 16361 (an E copy is known
to exist) **Scrapper Blackwell** Rambling Blues/
Sneaking Blues-Champion 16370 (an E copy
somewhere) **Scrapper Blackwell** Blue Day
Blues/Down South Blues-Champion 16452
(another E copy-all came from one source)
Scrapper Blackwell Blue Day Blues/Sneak-
ing Blues-Superior 2765 (no known copies)
Scrapper Blackwell Down South Blues/
Back Door Blues-Superior 2782 (no known
copies) **Scrapper Blackwell** Rambling Blues/
Hard Time Blues-Superior 2827 (no known
copies) **Alonzo Boone** (William Harris)
Kansas City Blues/Electric Chair Blues-
Supertone 9428 (one known copy, E) **Ishman**
Bracey Woman Woman Blues/Suitcase Full
Of Blues-Paramount 12970 (one known copy
V) **Ishman Bracey & The New Orleans**
Nehi Boys Bust Up Blues/Pay Me No Mind
(one known copy, E) **Mississippi Bracey**
You Scolded Me and Drove Me From Your Door/
I'll Overcome Someday-Okeh 8904 (two known
copies, E- and N-) **Mississippi Bracey** Cherry
Ball/Stered Gal-Okeh 8867 (no known copies)
Tommie Bradley Adam and Eve/Pack Up
Her Trunk Blues-Champion 16149 (one known
copy, V to V+) **Tommie Bradley** When You're
Down and Out-Champion 16308 (one known
copy, V- to V) **Tommie Bradley** Please
Don't Act That Way/Four Day Blues-Champion
16339 (one known copy, E+) **Tommie Bradley**
and James Cole Nobody's Business If I
Do/Window Pane Blues-Champion 16696 (no
known copies) **Tommie Bradley and James**
Cole Where You Been So Long/-Champion
16782 (one known copy, N-) **Tommie Bradley**
When You're Down and Out/Four Day Blues-
Superior 2736 (no known copies) **Emory Brooks**

Vocalion

1692 N
NUT FACTORY BLUES

—Brown—
"Hi" Henry Brown
Vocal with Guitars

courtesy of Bernard Klaczko

(John D. Fox) *The Worried Man Blues*—Champion 15416 (no known copies on Champion)
Big Bill Broonsey *How You Want It Done/Station Blues*—Paramount 13084 (no known copies)
Flossie Brown (Mae Glover) *Shake It Daddy/I Ain't Givin' Nobody None*—Champion 15814 (one known copy, V to V+) **Flossie and Duke Brown (Byrd & Glover)** *Pig Meat Mama/Gas Man Blues*—Champion 15858 (one known copy, E-?) **Hi Henry Brown** *Nut Factory Blues/Skin Man*—Vocalion 1692 (one known copy, E- with inaud. hair crk.) **Hi Henry Brown** *Hospital Blues/Brown Skin Angel* (no known copies)—Vocalion 1715 **Hi Henry Brown** *Titanic Blues/Preacher Blues*—Vocalion 1728 **Lottie Brown & Ace Jones (Kimbrough & Holmes)** *Lost Lover Blues/Wayward Girl Blues*—Supertone 9286 (one known copy, V-) **Lottie Brown (Kimbrough)** *Rolling Log Blues/Going Away Blues*—Supertone 9367 (three known copies, V+, G and cracked) **Richard 'Rabbit' Brown** *Mystery of the Dunbar's Child/Sinking of The Titanic*—Victor 35840 (two known copies, both E or better) **Willie Brown** *M and O Blues/Future Blues*—Paramount 13090 (one known copy, cracked); Champion 50023 (four known copies, all E or better) **Willie Brown** *Kicking In My Sleep Blues/Window Blues*—Paramount 13099 (no known copies) **Bumble Bee Slim** *Honey Bee Blues/Rough Rugged Road Blues*—Paramount 13132 (no known copies) **Charlie Burse** *I Got Good Taters/Little Green Slippers*—Champion 16481 (no known copies)
Burse and Shade *Fishing In The Dark*—Champion 16599 (no known copies) **Burse and Stephen Tappin'** *That Thing*—Champion 16654 (one known copy, E-) **John Byrd** *Billy Goat Blues/Old Timbrook Blues*—Paramount 12997 (three known copies in the V+ to E range).
(Additions to blues section: **Hi Henry Brown**—Vocalion 1728, one known copy in E condition; **Alonzo Boone**—Supertone 9428, a second copy in less than V condition exists.)
THE RAREST INSTRUMENTAL JAZZ—A TO B: Alabama Fuzzy Wuzzies (Frank Bunch) *Fuzzy Wuzzy*—Champion 15366 (no known copies on Champion) **Alabama Fuzzy Wuzzies** *Fourth Avenue Stomp*—Champion 15398 (one known copy, G+) **Alabama Fuzzy Wuzzies** *Congo Stomp*—Champion 15415 (no known copies on Champion) **Alabama Harmony Boys (Triangle Harmony Boys)** *Chicken Supper Strut/Sweet Patootie*—Silvertone 5139 (one known copy, E+) **Alabama Jazz Pirates (Triangle Harmony Boys)** *Canned Heat Blues*—Bell 1182 (no known copies on Bell) **Danny Altier & His Orchestra** *I'm Sorry, Sally/My Gal Sal*—Vocalion 15740 (three known copies) **Lovie Austin & Her Blues**

(three known copies) **Lovie Austin & Her Blues Serenaders** *Don't Shake It No More/Rampart Street Blues*—Paramount 12300 (estimated at more than five copies) **Lovie Austin & Her Blues Serenaders** *Too Sweet For Words*—Paramount 12313 (three known copies) **Lovie Austin & Her Blues Serenaders** *Galion Stomp/Chicago Mess Around*—Paramount 12380 (four known copies) **Lovie Austin & Her Blues Serenaders** *Merry Makers' Twine/In The Alley Blues* (five known copies) **Paramount 12391** **Barrelhouse Five** *It's Nobody's Business/Scufflin' Blues*—QRS 7057 (two known copies); Paramount 12942 (no known copies) **Slim Bartlett & His Orchestra (Syd Valentine)** *Asphalt Walk/Rock and Gravel*—Superior 2692 (no known copies) **Berlyn Baylor Orchestra** *Clarinet Marmalade/Riverboat Shuffle*—Gennett 6457 (one known copy); Champion 15477 (unknown); Champion 16422 (one known copy, E with hair crack); Superior 2817 (no known copies) **Bix & His Rhythm Jugglers** *Toddlin' Blues/Davenport Blues*—Gennett 5654 (five known copies) **Jimmy Bertrand's Washboard Wizards** *I'm Going Huntin'/If You Want To Be My Sugar Papa*—Vocalion 1099 (more than five copies estimated) **Jimmy Bertrand's Washboard Wizards** *Easy Come Easy Go Blues/The Blues Stampede*—Vocalion 1100 (more than five copies estimated) **Jimmy Bertrand's Washboard Wizards** *Isabella/I Won't Give You None*—Vocalion 1280 (more than five copies estimated) **Birmingham Bluetette** *Back Home Blues/Old Man Blues*—Herwin 92019 (three known copies ranging from E- to G) **Blackbirds of Paradise** *Bugahoma Blues/Tishomingo Blues*—Gennett 6210 (four known copies) **Blackbirds of Paradise** *Muddy Water/Sugar*—Gennett 6211 (two known copies) **Blackbirds of Paradise** *Razor Edge/Stompin' Fool*—Black Patti 8053 (no known copies) **Jimmy Blythe's Washboard Band** *Bohunkus Blues/Buddy Burton's Jazz*—Paramount 12368 (more than five copies estimated) **Jimmy Blythe and His Ragamuffins** *Messin' Around/Adams Apple*—Paramount 12396 (five known copies of 2nd master of Messin' Around, two known copies of first master of Messin' Around) **Blythe's Wash-**



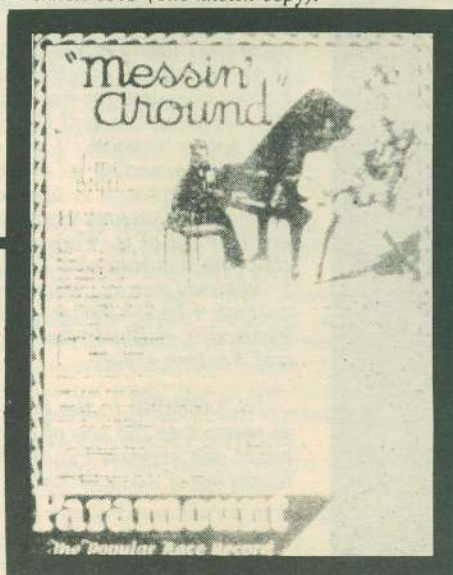
board Ragamuffins *Ape Man/Your Folks* (three known copies only) **Paramount 12428** **Jimmy Blythe's Owls** *Weary Way Blues/Poutin' Papa*—Vocalion 1135 (two known copies only) **Jimmy Blythe's Owls** *Hot Stuff/Have Mercy!*—Vocalion 1136 (three known copies) **Jimmy Blythe's Washboard Wizards** *My Baby/Oriental Man*—Vocalion 1180 (three known copies, ranging from E+ to mint) **Bobby's Revelers** *Too Sweet For Words*—Silvertone 3537 (one known copy) **Bobby's Revelers** *Don't Shake It No More*—Silvertone 3551 (no known copies) **Booker Orchestra** *Camp Nelson Blues/Salty Dog*—Gennett 6375 (no known copies) **Perry Bradford's Jazz** *Phools* *Lucy Long/I Ain't Gonna Play No Second*




Fiddle-Vocalion 15165 (more than five copies estimated) **King Brady's Clarinet Band** ('Kid' Ernest Michall) Embarrassment Blues/Lazybone Blues-Gennett 6393 (one known copy) **Broadway Pickers** Salty Dog/Stealin' Away-Broadway 5069 (no known copies) **Harvey Brooks' Quality Four** Mistreatin' Daddy/Frankie And Johnny-Hollywood 1008 (one known copy) **Harvey Brooks' Quality Four** If You'll Come Back/Nobody's Sweetheart-Hollywood 1021 (one known copy) **Harvey Brooks' Quality Four** Down On The Farm/Who Will Get It?-Hollywood 1022 (one known copy) **Henry Brown** Twenty First Street Stomp/Henry Brown Blues-Paramount 12825 (more than five copies estimated) **Henry Brown** Blues Stomp/Blind Boy Blues-Paramount 12934 (two known copies) **Merritt Brunies & His Friars Inn Orchestra** Up Jumped The Devil/Follow The Swallow-Autograph (un-numbered) (one known copy) **Merritt Brunies & His Friars Inn Orchestra** Angry/I Weep Over You-Autograph 610 (one known copy) **Merritt Brunies & His Friars Inn Orchestra** Flag That Train/Clarinet Marmalade-Autograph 624 (one known copy) **Frank Bunch and His Fuzzy Wuzzies** Fuzzy Wuzzy-Gennett 6278 (four known copies) **Frank Bunch and His Fuzzy Wuzzies** Fourth Avenue Stomp/Congo Stomp-Gennett 6293 (three known copies); Heroin 92044 (no known copies) **Ezra Buzzington's Rustic Revelers** Bass Blues/Brown Jug Blues-Gennett 6575 (one known copy).

CONSPICUOUS OMISSIONS: Such borderline jazz rarities as Maynard Baird on Vocalion, two Barrelhouse Five ORS's and Paramounts, the Phil Baxter Victor 40,000's, and the Bucktown Five on Gennett. **THE SCORE:** In the initial A to B listing, the Gennett family labels (Gennett, Champion, Superior, Black Patti and the Gennett-pressed Supertones, Silvertones, and Bells) led with a resounding total of 46 rarities—30 for country blues and 16 for instrumental jazz. The biggest company of the era (Victor) was also the most spectacular loser with no copies shown. However, Victor claims they will make a stronger showing in future listings, when releases on its depression-dropout 23250 thru 23400 series come to light. Expected to remain a consistent 'also-ran' at No. 2 position is Paramount with its door-to-door canvassed, 'rare in any condition' 12900 thru 13100's series and the icy reception originally given its hot jazz from 12300's up. Firming the middle in both blues and jazz sections are the Vocalion 1000 series and Brunswick 7000 series. Predictions have Columbia, No. 2 in sales but low in the value division, fighting it out in the cellar with Okeh for last place. Okeh, with Victor, failed to impress in the opening round. In addition, Decca failed to deliver the grandstand showing it promised by not qualifying in the opening round, and an early season estimate has them hesitantly bowing out for the remainder of the contest. **BLUES WINNER:** Top man in the blues section was Indianapolis blues singer Scrapper Blackwell. His only comment was a terse "It's too early for predictions." **JAZZ WINNER:** Over in the jazz section, Chicago-pianist Jimmy Blythe, who fronted various groups under his name, had the highest tally. He is reported to have said, "It's no accident of course. I picked the companies I was to record with very carefully...before buying out their remaining record stocks and warehousing my records in their original sleeves as part of a 40-year investment program...I should also point out that at least three of my piano solos-duets would have made the jazz section, but for some obscure reason, were relegated to a future piano listing."

courtesy of Nick Perls





The Blues Didn't Die With Charlie Patton's Last Record!

By LAWRENCE COHN

Charlie Patton was a great blues artist, one of the very best. Furthermore, he is certainly one of my favorites, so that it must be understood at the outset that I bear no personal malice or disdain insofar as the 'legendary' Mississippi Delta blues artist is concerned. But it has become distressingly apparent that things have gone disturbingly awry, in both record collecting and listening, in respect to the blues and several directly related fields. Unfortunately, Charlie Patton, the 'darling' of those to whom this writing is pointedly directed, (it is not aimed at listeners, and collectors, who have followed some sort of coherent musical development), has become a symbol, a rallying point, perhaps even an icon, whose recordings they believe herald the initiation, high-water mark and eventual termination of meaningful achievement in the blues field.

In recent years small, but apparently well-organized, devoted little bands of "aficionados," have evolved in several sections of the country, probably consisting of younger listeners. Their primary bent and devotion, in most instances, is solely that area which they designate "country blues," evoking pseudo-romantic visions of old brownskins with guitars "broke and hungry and ain't got a dime." But hark! Mississippi Delta singer Tommy Johnson was photographed wearing a COAT AND TIE, AND NOT OVERALLS, when he posed for the RCA Victor Company's catalog. Distressing in relation to the desired image, isn't it?

It must also be borne in mind that their "definition" of country blues generally differs from both the academic one (whatever that may be) and whatever you and I might consider it to be. ("Blind Lemon Jefferson! You mean that City blues singer!") They appear to equate crudity, primitiveness and almost total archaicism with quality, truth and beauty. Of course, Lonnie Johnson (is Mississippi John Hurt really any less of a ballad singer than Johnson?), electric guitars, Big Bill Broonzy—except for his Paramount recording of "House Rent Stomp," ("if it's Paramount it's got to be good.") and most any Bluebird artist not sounding as rough as Tommy McClennan, whose acceptance is tenuous at best, are artificial. Sessions made with electric guitars are just out of it. Parenthetically, I might add that this position also applies to those fervent "old-timey music" aficionados who, much as their Charlie Patton cousins, dismiss Nashville, Hillbilly and the various Country and Western styles.

As a rebuttal to the inane rationale in respect to the use of amplified instruments might one suggest the electric guitar rendering of such "country" or "down-home"

artists as Big Joe Williams and Lightnin' Hopkins, to name but a few. A number of years ago Williams stated (to the writer): "Sure I amplify my guitar sometimes; especially when I work the smaller, noisier joints. Makes it possible to be heard." A completely logical and practical approach!



"Hang It On The Wall" was the last issued title recorded by Patton in New York, Feb. 1, 1934. Vocalion 2931 was the last Patton Vocalion to be released.

It is more than understood that the tastes and desires of people are several, much the same as they have different wants and needs. These are universal truths. What is rather baffling, though, is the fact that these individuals have achieved an illusory, self-designated status of influence in the process of extolling the virtues of the country blues, (which certainly can stand upon its own merits), while, at the same time, creating a superficial aura of almost complete authority and knowledgeability about themselves and a mythical "in" kingdom as an adjunct. One can not help but wonder in respect to such intricate knowledge achieved without any attempt to savor or understand in any shape or form, other directly related musical traditions.

White country music is casually dismissed in toto. "No feeling," "too corny," (like Homer and Jethro?) and that most heinous of all transgressions, "too commercial!" With Jimmie Rodgers, the "Singing Brakeman," mockery and sarcasm come easy. The obvious is by-passed: the link, inter-relationship and interchange of white and Negro musical traditions in the South. (For a further discussion of this point, consult John Cohen's excellent, directly pertinent, article "The Folk Music Interchange: Negro and White," *Sing Out*, January 1965.) An individual such as Uncle Dave Macon is relegated to the status of a buffoon and "who" are Sam and Kirk McGhee? Heaven help the one who

should go so far as to mention Hank Williams, Ernest Tubb and Buck Owens. As for the likes Joan Baez, the Greenbriar Boys, the New Lost City Ramblers and some of the "New Wave," Dave Ray, Mark Spoelstra, etc., well, you had just better forget about it. And Bob Dylan, The Beatles and many others, they really don't exist and are only the machinations of some press agent's abortive attempts to perpetrate a hoax upon an unsuspecting public.

No salient reason is apparent for the obviously stringent dichotomy insisted upon as between the "Charlie Pattonites'" relatively narrow area and all other musical traditions, particularly the white ones. The limits, and subsequent "guideposts," are self-imposed, confining and completely senseless. One would think that exploration of the several related traditions would evolve almost naturally as a result of musical curiosity, if for no other reason. It is one thing to dislike, despise and abhor various musical styles, (these are inalienable prerogatives), after having achieved some sort of passing acquaintance with them, even if such be of the most fleeting sort. But, to excoriate the same thing without even the most cursory attempts at familiarization reeks of the lack of sensibility and direction.

One of the reasons, seemingly contributory, to the narrow musical development of this particular school (The "Pattonites") appears to be their initial introduction to music. Unlike many other listeners and collectors they, (in most instances), have not arrived at the country blues through, and as a logical outgrowth of, jazz interests. (Though this is certainly not the sole avenue of entry!) A fairly normal route, it appears, would be initial contact with jazz of some sort, generally "traditional," "dixieland" or "classic," (Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver, Johnny Dodds, Bunk Johnson, Lu Waters, Turk Murphy, etc.) but by no means excluding "modern," (Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk also play blues) to boogie-woogie and various related piano blues styles and thence to guitar blues. Then from guitar blues back to the shaping sources: religious music, prison and work songs, the various white traditions including "old-timey" mountain, hillbilly, etc. All of this appears to have been directly by-passed by the "Pattonites." The result has been a short-cut to a musical "straight-jacket."

The standard reaction is "He's white and he just can't sing or play like a 'spade' cat." Well now, why must one do so? Is this really a necessary requirement for acceptance? Of course it isn't! It is rather ridiculous to even expect one to sing and play exactly like another. Such concentratedly slavish imitation would, of certainty, result in the emasculation of creative efforts.

To a degree they, the "Charlie Pattonites," remind one of the hard-core traditional-jazz "mouldy-figs" who would, and still do, debate endlessly problems of such magnitude as: was Bix Beiderbecke really in the studio at a particular time and did he really take a two-bar break? Rather an unfortunate hang-up to be sure.

Or, to extend this even further, have you heard the one about the collector who would listen to and collect records of bands under seven pieces, which were recorded in Chicago and New Orleans during the years 1925-30 only! Sound ludicrous? Perhaps, but a parallel exists directly with the "Pattonites." Such an attitude bears little little difference from that of total rejection of the electric guitar and looking upon the same as a complete manifestation of the Devil. And, that all subsequent recordings and efforts constitute the "Dead Shrimp" (with apologies to Robert Johnson) of blues recordings. Personal preference may run to unamplified instruments but such a position does not require a summary dismissal of all recordings utilizing amplified instruments. Does Little Walter and his electric mouth-harp pale when listened to alongside Noah Lewis? Hardly! Such complete and categoric dismissals, coupled with awkwardly dogmatic appraisals, give rise to incredibly narrow and stifling musical attitudes.

photo courtesy of Laurence Cohn & Frank Driggs



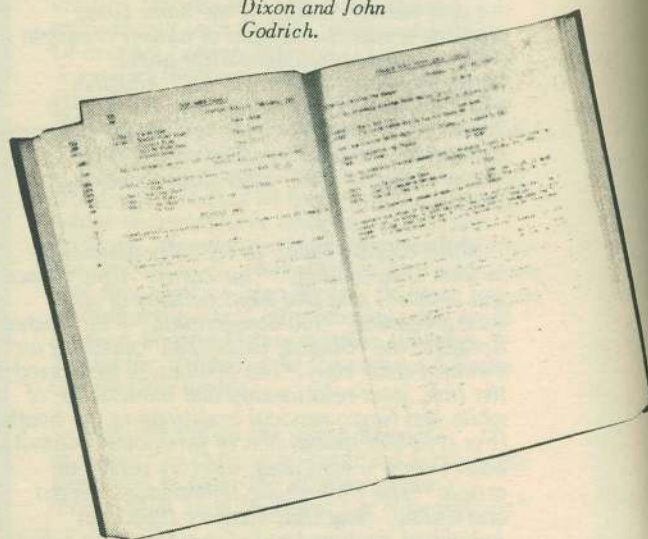
**Big Bill Broonzy (early 1930's)...
Was he in the running?...**

There isn't anything degrading or submissive in one stating that he (or she) is enamoured of the roughest, most obscure blues singer on the one hand and Montana Slim's "There's A Bluebird On Your Windowsill" and Johnny Cash on the other. Is one really the complete antithesis of the other? Are they truly of diverse polarities? There are ways to find out. Listening to such artists as Wilf Carter, Hobart Smith and the Staple Singers would be one way to gain the tools needed to arrive at valid and knowledgeable musical evaluations and opinions. For instance: there are few better contemporary examples of Mississippi blues guitar than that of Father Roebuck Staples—even if he does play an amplified, solid-bodied instrument. Who knows? You may even get "turned-on" by the likes of

Almeda Riddle, the Grand Ole Opry and the Blue Sky Boys. Greater tragedies do exist than admitting to the fact that Hank Snow is capable of meaningful performances as is B.B. King.

In many ways we are in need of such a devoted, almost fanatical element. But the entire musical maturation process need not be so completely, and resolutely bypassed in the operation. Yes, Charlie Pattonites: There's a big musical world out there. Savor some of it, You might even get to enjoy it!!

We are sorry that *Blues & Gospel Records, 1902-1942* is temporarily out of print. A revised edition (including countless additions, material not in the first edition, and a number of extra features) is practically complete, and negotiations are in progress for its publication. This much improved revision should be available before very long.—R.M.W.
Dixon and John Godrich.



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(3) CHARLEY PATTON-

Pony Blues/Banty Rooster

Blues-Para 12792 F

(4) SIPPY WALLACE-Dead

Drunk Blues/Have you Ever

Been Down-OK 8499 G

(small dig last side)

(5) SARA MARTIN-Mean

Tight Mama/Kitchen Man

Blues-ORS 7043 V-

(6) ISHMAN BRACEY-

Saturday Blues/Left Alone

Blues-Vic 21349 G to G

(7) CLARENCE WILLIAMS

-Whoop It Up/I'm Not

Worrying-CO 14447 G

(8) ELDERS McIntorsh &

EDWARDS-The 1927 Flood/

What Kind of Man OK 8647

V-/G

(9) FURRY LEWIS-Jelly-

Roll/Mr. Furry's Blues-

VO 1115 E-V

(10) CHARLEY PATTON

-Down The Dirt Road Blues/

It Won't Be Long-Para

12854 F-(1st side-1 dig,

internal 1" hair crk, inaud-

ible; 2nd side-3 digs)

(11) FRANK STOKES-

Bedtime Blues/Downtown

Blues-Vic 21272 G

(12) CLARENCE WILL-

LIAMS WSHBD 5-Take Your

Black Bottom/Cushion Foot

Stomp-OK 8462 V-

(13) TED LEWIS-Tin

Roof Blues/Milnberg

Jays-Co 439 G

(14) MEMPHIS JUG

BAND-Stingy Woman

Blues/Sun Brimmers BIs

-Vic 20552 G

(15) BLIND LEMON

JEFFERSON-Rising High

Water/Teddy Bear-Para

12437 G

(16) SONNY GREER-

Saturday Night Function/

Beggars Blues-Vo 3012 G

(17) MEMPHIS MINNIE-

I'm Talking about You No.2

/Bumble Bee No.2-Vo 1556 G

(18) CHARLIE McFADDEN-

Low Down (Rounder Blues/

Last Journey Blues-BB 5325

E-

(19) CLARENCE WILLIAMS

ORCH-Mountain City Blues/

Lazy Mama-OK 8592 G

(20) HAMBONE WILLIE

NEWBERN-Roll & Tumble/

Nobody Knows-OK 8679 G

(21) REV. F.W. McGHEE-

Jonah In Belly of Whale/

When His Stripes-Vic

20772 G

(22) JIMMY O'BRYANT-

Stepping On Gas/3 J Blues

-Para 12294 V (min. \$5)

(23) CHARLIE SPAND-

Good Gal/Back To The

Woods-para 12817 V

(min. \$7)

(24) ELDERS McINTORSH

& EDWARDS-Since I Laid

My Burden Down/Latter

Raine-OK 8638 G

(25) TWO POOR BOYS-

(Evans & McLain)-Take A

Look At My Baby/Sitting

On Top Of The World-

Romeo 5079 G

(dig, does not pass)

(26) ETHEL WATERS &

HER BAND-Jeebie

Jeebies/Everybody Mess

Around-Co 14153 V

(27) EVA TAYLOR with

C. Williams Blue 5-Shake

That Thing/Get It Fixed-

OK 8267 E

(28) DAD NELSON-

Cottonfield Blues/Red

River Blues-Para 12401

E (Louisiana 12-string)

(29) BEALE STREET

SHEIKS-Sweet To Mama/

1/2 Cup of Tea-Para

12531 G

(30) CLARENCE WIL-

LIAMS ORCH-Sweet

Emaline/Log Cabin BIs-

OK 8572 G

(31) MA RAINEY-Seek-

ing Blues/Mt. Jack Blues

-Para 12352 E

(32) HOMETOWN SKIF-

FLE-Part 1/Part 2-

Para 12886 G (1/4-inch

hair crk, has not moved

in 5 years)

(33) CHIPPY HILL-

Mess Katie Mess/Street-

Walker BIs-OK 8437 G

(34) LOUIS ARMSTRONG

-Peanut Vendor/You're

Driving Me Crazy-OK

41478 V-

(35) TEXAS ALEX-

ANDER-Frisco Blues/

Work Ox Blues-OK

8658 G (rim flake)

(36) NEW ORLEANS

WANDERERS-Perdido

Street BIs/Gatemouth-

Co 698 V-

(37) MEMPHIS JUG

BAND-Kansas City

Blues/State of Tenn.

Blues-Vic 21185 V

(38) JAMES WIGGINS-

(Bl. Leroy Garnett,

Piano)-44 Blues (digs,

they pass; rim flake)/

Frisco Bound-Para

12860 G

(39) MISSISSIPPI

SHEIKS-Stop & Listen/

Driving That Thing-

OK 8807 G

(40) BESSIE JACK-

SON-Roll & Rattle/Groc-

eries On Shelf-Romeo

5285 G (Alabama Blues)

(41)

(above rim flake)

(41) HENRY WHITTIER

-Rain Crow Bill/H.W.

Fox Chase-Vic 20878 G

(42) WALTER ROLAND

-Early This Morning/

House Rent Lady-Romeo

5257 G (Alabama barrel-

house)

(43) TAMPA RED-Cotton

Seed Blues/Things About

Coming My Way-Vo 1637 V-

(44) BLIND WILLIE

JOHNSON-Jesus Make Up

Dying Bed/Know His Blood

-Co 14276 V

(45) MEMPHIS MINNIE &

KANSAS JOE-Can I Do

It To You-1/Part 2-Vo

(46)

1523 G (rim flake)

(46) BENNY MOTEN-

Moten Stomp/CLIFFORD

HAYES-Blue Guitar

Stomp-Vic 20995 V

(47) ELZADIE ROBIN-

SON-(acc. Will Ezell)-

Sawmill Blues/Barrel-

house Man-Para 12417

G (dig, passes; rim flake)

(48) IDA COX-Laudy

Laudy Blues/Moaning

Groaning BIs-Para

12064 G

(49) DIXIE WASHBOARD

BAND-My Own BIs/You

For Me-Co 14141 E

(lam. cracks)

(50) BESSIE SMITH-

Hard Driving Papa/Money

Blues-Co 14137 E-

(Smith, cornet)(lam crks)

(51) CLARENCE WIL-

LIAMS ORCH-Norfolk

Church Street/Yama

Yama Blues-OK 8525

V-(rim flakes)

(52) EDWARD CLAY-

BORN-Your Enemies

Can Not Harm You/

Gospel Train-Vo 1082 G

(53) WILLIE JACKSON-

T B Blues/Kansas City

Blues-Co 14284 V

(54) BESSIE SMITH-

House Rent BIs/Work

House BIs-Co 14032 V-

(55) ALBERTA HUN-

TER-Chirping BIs/

Someone Else-Para

12017 V (red wax)

(56) BARBECUE BOB

-Going Up Country/

Miss. Low Levee BIs-

Co 14316 V

(57) MA RAINEY-Dream

Blues/Lost Wandering

Blues-Para 12098 V

(picture record)

(58) MA RAINEY-Honey

Where You Been/Ma Rain-

ey's Mystery Record-

Para 12200 E

(59) LEROY CARR-Hold

Them Puppies/Court

Room Blues-Vo 02751 G

(60) SOUTHLAND JUB-

ILEE SINGERS-Lord I

Can't Stay Away/Get On

Board-Herwin 92009 V

(61) LITTLE CHOC-

OLATE DANDIES-That's

How I Feel/6 or 7 Times

-OK 8728 V (dig, passes)

(62) ARIZONA DRANES

with Rev. F.W. McGee-

Lamb's Blood/Going Home

On Morning Train-OK

8419 E

(63) MA RAINEY-Jeal-

ous Hearted Blues/See

See Rider Blues-Para

12252 V

(64) BLIND LEMON

JEFFERSON-Lemon's

Cannon Ball Moan/

Change My Luck BIs-

Para 12639 G

(65) IDA COX-Cherry

Picking BIs/Wild Women

Don't Have BIs-Para

12228 V-

(66) DEACON L.J.

BATES-All I Want Is

78 AUCTIONS

- (73) REV. J.M. GATES—Amazing Grace/Pil Be Satisfied—Herwin 92003 F4
(74) MEMPHIS JUG BAND—Jug Band Waltz/Miss. River Waltz—Vic 38537 (tiny 2 & 3/4-inch hair crk.)
(75) STOVEPIPE JOHNSON—I Ain't Got Nobody/Don't Let Your Mouth—Vo 1211 V (above is the rarest of all Jimmy Noone records)
(76) CLARENCE WILLIAMS BLUE 5—Shreveport Bls/Mean Bls—OK 40006 F4

BERNARD KLATZKO 45 First Street Glen Cove, N.Y. 11542

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(3) LOUIS WASHINGTON—Standin' On A Rock/Heaven In My View—Vo 02658 G
(4) BARRELHOUSE 5—Hot Lovin'/Mama Stayed Out—Para 12851 G
(5) FURRY LEWIS—Kassie Jones—Part 1/Part 2—Vic 21664 E
(6) PERRY BRADFORD—Orig. Black Bottom/Kans. City Bls—OK 8416 V—(rough start)
(7) ROBERT JOHNSON—Terraplane Bls/Kind Hearted Woman Bls—Vo 03416 N
(8) LOVIE AUSTIN—Don't Shake It No More/Rampart Street Bls—Para 12300 E
(9) BUKKA WHITE—High Fever Bls/When Can I Change My Clothes—Vo 05489 N
(10) KING OLIVER—Just Gone/Canal Street Bls—Gnt 5133 V
(11) JUBILEE GOSPEL TEAM—Lower My Dying Head/Oh Lord, Remember Me—QRS 7015 E (rim chip not to groove)
(12) JIMMY O'BRYANT—Red Hot Mama/Drunk Man's Strut—Para 12246 E
(13) JIMMY O'BRYANT—Skoodlum Bls/Midnight Strutters—Para 12260 E
(14) MAGGIE JONES (Louis acc.)—Poor House Bls/Thunderstorm Bls—Co 14050 E

(15) MAGGIE JONES (Louis acc.)—Anybody Here Want to.../You May Go—Co 14063 E (dig, passes)

WANTED: Fantastic prices paid for these records in the following minimum conditions:

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SKIP JAMES—Para 13072, 13111—V
SON HOUSE—Para 13096 V
WILLIAM HARRIS—Gnt 6752 V
HI HENRY BROWN—Vo 1728, 1715 V
WILLIE BROWN—Para 13090, 13099 V
BLIND JOE RAYNOLDS—Para 12983 V
SAM COLLINS—Gnt 6181 E
TOMMY JOHNSON—Para 13000, 12975 V
HENRY SIMS—Para 12912 E
JAYDEE SHORT—Para 13043, 13091, 13040 V
ELVIE THOMAS—Para 12977 V
RABBITS FOOT WILLIAMS—Ch 15339 E
MARSHALL OWENS—Para 13117, 13131 V
JABO WILLIAMS—Para 13141 E
PIANO KID EDWARDS—Para 13086, 13051 V
FRANK BUNCH—Gnt 6193 E
LOVIE AUSTIN—Para 12380, 12391 E
FREDDIE KEPPARD—Para 12399 E
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FOR TRADE ONLY

- (1) FRANK BUNCH & HIS FUZZY WUZZIES—Fuzzy Wuzzy—Gnt 6278 E
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(3) TROY FERGUSON/TROY FERGUSON & JESSE THOMAS—College Blues/Good Night—Co 14483 V
(4) SMOKEHOUSE CHARLIE (Georgia Tom)—My Texas Bls/Somebody's Been Using...No.2—Ch 15794 V
(5) JESSE JAMES—Lonsome Day Bls/Southern Casey Jones—De 7213 V (faded label)
(6) BUDDY BAKER (Ernest Baker—I guess whoeverthell he is!)—Box Car Bls/Penitentiary Bls—Vic 21549 N

- (7) GEORGE "HAMBONE" RUTHERS—Moanin' Piano Bls/Street Walkin' Bls—Ch 15795 V
(8) CHICKEN WILSON & SKEETER HINTON—House Snake Bls/Chicken Wilson Bls—QRS 7052 E
(9) VOL STEVENS—Baby Got The Rickets/Vol Stevens Bls—Vic 21356 N
WANTED: Texas Alexander OK 8673; Alabama Rascals PER 0205, 0240; Henry Allen Vic 23006, 23338; Louis Armstrong OK 8729, 41375, 41560; Jimmy Bertrand Vo 1280; Blythe's Owls Vo 1135; Cannon Jug Stompers—many; Chocolate Dandies Vo 1610, 1617; E.C. Cobb & His Corn Eaters; Doc Cook Co 727; Eddie & Sugar Lou Vo 1723, 1714; Douglas Finnel; Benny Goodman Co 2927, 3011; Paul Howard Vic 22660, Vic 23354, 23420; Frisky Foot Jackson, Graveyard Johnson, or King Mutt (any except Good Time Mama); Roy Johnson; Tommy Johnson; Kentucky Jazz Babies; Furry Lewis—many; Andy Kirk—3 on Br; Miff Mole Molers OK 40932, 41273; Memphis Jug Band Vic 38578, 21412, 9/OK 8955, 8958, 8960; Memphis Night Hawks Vo 1736, 1744; Grant Moore Vo 1645; Red Perkins; Teddy Peters; Tiny Parham Vic 22842, 23027, 23286; Gil Roden Crown 3017; Savannah Syncopators; Savoy Bearcats; Frank Stokes—Beale St. Sheiks—most; Jesse Stone; Henry Thomas Vo 1286, 1230, 1249; Fats Waller Vic 38119; Whoopie Makers "After You've Gone".

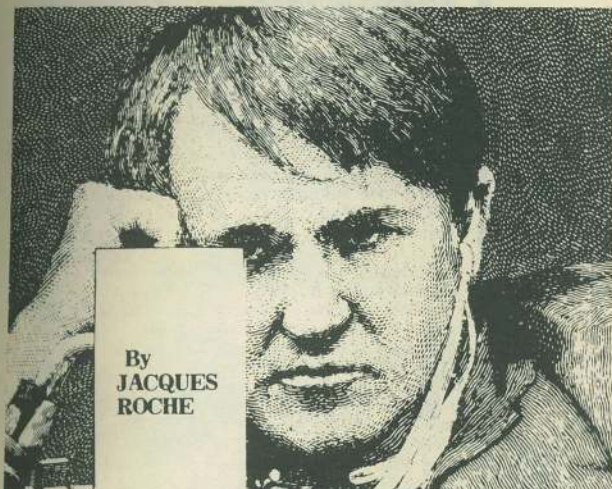
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(4) PAUL HOWARD's QUALITY SERENADERS—Overnight Blues/Charlie's Idea—Vic 22001 N (good band)
(5) JUNIE C. COBB & GRAINS OF CORN—Once or Twice/(6 Jolly Jesters)—Vo 1449 V
(6) JOHNNY DODDS—Pencil Papa/Sweet Lorraine—Vic 38038 E

- (7) EDITH WILSON—Get Even With You/My Handy Man Ain't Handy—Vic 38624 N (good band)
(8) JACK GARDNER's ORCH.—Who? You?/Who'd A Thunk It—OK 40339 N
(9) JACK GARDNER's ORCH.—Never Know Difference/Pretty Prairie Flower—OK 40572 N
(10) THOMAS MORRIS—PAST JAZZ MASTERS—Lonesome Journey/Jazz Band Plays—OK 4867 N
(11) EVA TAYLOR with BLUE FIVE—Oh, Daddy/Banana Blues—OK 4927 N
(12) JELLY ROLL MARTON—Big Fat Ham/Muddy Water—Para 12050 V/E* (clean, plays E).
WRITE TO ME IF YOU HAVE OTHER GOOD JAZZ AND JUG BAND RECORDS FOR TRADE OR SALE!

THE WORDS



By
JACQUES
ROCHE

courtesy of T. Edison

CAN BLUES SINGERS BE TRACED BY THEIR OWN LYRICS?
Here are some fascinating examples by arch-detective Roche on how to discover the true locations and identities of blues singers ...through their own words!

THE SEARCH for facts about about Charley Patton conducted three summers ago by today's foremost country blues historian, Gayle Wardlow, and the leading collector of country blues 78s, Bernard Klatzko (who described their trip for the *Origin Jazz Library's* Patton supplement), would seem to have depended on the random legwork and relative insatiability of the two men. By an apparently lucky fluke, they stumbled upon Bertha Lee's sister in Lula, Mississippi.

Actually, Wardlow had known all along that Lula, of all other ineffable dots on the Delta map, was the most logical place to look for Patton's blues-singing wife. On *DRY WELL BLUES*, he had distinguished the Patton verse:

When I was livin' at Lula,
I was livin' at ease
Lord the draught come and
caught us and it,
parched up all the trees.

ON DIFFERENT RECORDS, Patton mentions so many towns that Son House doubts the authenticity of Patton's self-styled travels. (In *HIGH WATER EVERYWHERE*, Patton's itinerary would turn any blues researcher who tried to follow it into a motorized cockroach.) House even suspects that the proper names which abound in Patton's blues, right down to *ELDER GREEN*, were faked. Apparently for other Delta residents of Patton's era, however, such references implied a cosmopolitan aspect that Patton, who travelled as far from Lula as Jackson, Meridian, Magnolia, and Gulfport with Son House, liked to play upon. Conversely, the more mobile blues practitioners of the 1930's may have found it expedient to eradicate any local or "hick" stamp from their lyrics.

When more direct methods prove fruitless, as is often the case within the Delta theatre of operations, Wardlow discards his usual blitzkrieg tactics and retreats to contemplate the lyrics and musical style of his missing quarry. The more obscure the singer, the more important the nuances provided by his records.

ONE SUCH PERSONAL NON-ENTITY is Bo Weavil Jackson, whose bottleneck bravura, *YOU CAN'T KEEP NO BROWN*, has reminded some, Son House included, of House's work: in particular, the piece he now calls *LEVEE CAMP MOAN* and first recorded as *LOW DOWN, DIRTY DOG* (credited to 'Willie Wilson of Greenwood'). Some melodic strains Jackson uses on that record also seem loosely related to Patton's *WHEN YOUR WAY GETS DARK*. Moreover, Jackson's 'pick-up' towards the latter part of *YOU CAN'T KEEP NO BROWN* recalls Patton's momentum-gathering attack. The lyrics Jackson employs are nearly identical with those of Delta artists like Patton, Willie Brown, William Harris, Kid Bailey, and Garfield Akers.

Though Jackson's *SOME SCREAM HIGH YELLOW* bears a certain harmonic and rhythmic resemblance to Son House's *DRY SPELL*, his guitar digresses in a manner not generally associated with the 'pulsating', 'undulating', 'palpitating', epileptically-jack-hammering Delta guitar picker. Hence, it may be inferred that Bo Weavil, if not actually culturally deprived, learned or developed a pre-'big beat' musical style. In fact, Jackson's syntax ('I'm crazy about my Jane, tell the world I do') indicates a backwardness far greater than that of a Charley Patton, and is rather suggestive of Henry Thomas or Eli Framer. One obviously archaic vocal technique of Jackson's *IS*, however, duplicated by Patton: that of deliberately distorting the pronunciation of a word. The first verse of *YOU CAN'T KEEP NO BROWN* is sung:

Soon this mornin' mama
Blues all around my bed
Thinkin' about the kind
Words that my mama sLaid.

On *SCREAMIN' AND HOLLERIN' THE BLUES*, Patton bawls:

Lord have mercy
On my wicked sLoul...

SON HOUSE states that Patton spoke clearly but sang in a strangely garbled fashion (making it no surprise that only two of his verses, according to Klatzko's report, are still recalled by his former associates); it would now seem that the difficulties of rendering an accurate transcription of a Patton song are generic. Both Bo Weavil and Patton, besides using the paused or "broken" vocal phrasing which is typical of the most rural of blues singers, half-swallow certain words and blur others by bunching them together with subsequent ones. Their patois makes a travesty of phonetic transcription; one could only guess at which words are funkily apocopated by the two singers. An exploded, over-simplified view of a Jackson line might read:

Thinkin' BOUTtheeki-Ind;
WORDSTHATmy mama had slaid

According to the varying length of a given line, or its syllabic breakdown, Jackson emphasizes different words by a sudden change in over-all

volume or pitch. By drawing out certain words and cutting others off abruptly, Jackson also imparts a disjointed and disarming quality to his work that might ordinarily be described by blues writers (were they able to paraphrase Joyce) as the "traumatized nightmare of the blue Mississippi stud." Jackson's technique, but not "the nightmare", was further stylized by Patton:

Hitich CHUPMYPONY;
SADDLEUP myeye blackmairr...

consider Patton a dull tool or else, incomprehensible. Both views obscure Patton's method by attributing a systematic vocal technique to extraneous and putative socio-psycho causes.

But is Bo Weavil Jackson, then, merely old-fashioned like Charley Patton, or was he an actual neighbor of the garrulous griff? Both. On PISTOL BLUES, Bo Weavil uses the second verse to drop the eggs:

I know she had a man, on Tutwiler,
Had a man on the (Sun) Flower...



Closeup of Bo-Weavil Jackson shows an older, frail man.

THUS, THE IMAGE of Patton himself as a peasant yarn-spinner whose lived-extinctionism forces his oral history of the Delta to be inchoate, as well as that of the Delta singer in general as a choked-up, pop-eyed, "outraged" black Christ whose social crucifixion forces him to tear each stinging urgent word from his rope-burned (not to mention tightened, greased, gritty, twitching, raw, or turgid) throat, is a little overdrawn. In confining itself to the particular, the existential viewpoint, once purveyed on the sleeve notes of a Patton reissue on Origin, tags Patton with both a unique (and universal) singing approach (which he actually shares ONLY with Bo Weavil Jackson). The racial view, currently in coin among the more poetic blues panderers, is, aside from being basically preposterous, unable to link Patton with or dissociate him from ANY specified singer; it only serves up a sop to those "phrenetics" (as Skip James calls them) who might otherwise

On YOU CAN'T KEEP NO BROWN, he reveals his usual whereabouts:

Girl I'm going, up the country,
Won't be very long
Little gal,
Girl you shouldn't a been in Glendora.

SINCE BOTH RECORDS are of vintage 1926, Bo Weavil Jackson is thus the first Delta singer to record (possibly Paramount's first "field" discovery), and, WITH Charley Patton, a "father of the Delta blues", if such a man existed. Unfortunately, the timbre of his voice does not fit the image of the dark-voiced DELTA darkie, so his place in the sun has been hitherto denied him.

On HAMMER (sic) BLUES, ("if this train has left, well it may be now be up at Rome"), as well as on HIGH WATER EVERYWHERE ("Backwater done rose all around Sumner..."), Patton infiltrates Jackson's native region. To add credence to the claim that Bo Weavil made the same Delta scene as the ubiquitous Charley Patton, one can compare his allusion to a burnt-out mill in SOME SCREAM HIGH YELLOW:

Hear the rollin' mill
Sure lord burnt down last night
I can't get that
Brown in this town today.

with a verse used by Patton in MOON GOING DOWN:

Oh well where were you now baby,
Clarksdale mill burnt down?
"I was way down Sunflower with my,
Face all fulla frowns."

Both point out the importance of their mill jobs to local women.

OVERCONCERN with Jackson's present whereabouts conceals a misplaced pedantry; his studio photograph of 40 years ago highlights his greying hair, and his "hollaring" Delta vocal style only accentuates a voice that is already rasping with age. In his songs, he does not refer to himself as "Bo Weavil", but as "Jack"; not surprisingly, neither name raised any local eyebrows when Gayle Wardlow (who assembled the first biographical profile of Jackson) reconnoitered the Delta turf.

Although Kid Bailey's noticeably "smooth vocal delivery" (cf. Origin no. 5) would seem to remove him from the clench-throated, slack-jawed, tight-scrotummed Delta abyss that has captured the fixed gaze of our revered critics, his caesural singing in the first verse of MISSISSIPPI BOTTOM BLUES may have irrevocably obscured a hometown reference. The first half of the give-away line is sung as though it were two words; hence the all-important phrase (to the researcher) is blurred. My own approximation of his verse is:

Way down in Mississippi
Where I was bred and born
Reared at Sunflower
Be my native home.

BY TYING HIS WORDS in with his guitar rhythm, he, like other Delta singers, automatically restricts the choice and number of words in a given line. Even though Bailey as a composer rebels against this imposition by refusing to chant a fixed refrain or to whoop his way through his songs, latter-day critics would have us paranoically believe that Bailey is forced by society's failure to "reach" him to accept or actually create verbal limitations in his blues. Thus, it can be said of the above-quoted line that "...the angry, anguished, forlorn Bailey, in brooding over the reality that hung around the barrelhouse at which he played, like the sifting sludge after a spring rain, uses a choked growl as he sings the name of his ugly hometown. It is at this very moment of searing melancholy that Bailey is most poetic; that his mean, hard, music speaks most clearly to us." The implication that Bailey's mental state has been thus conveyed to a critic who can't transcribe and doesn't interpret each verse, is, of course, phrenetic. With or without such histrionics, Bailey, despite his close links with Willie Brown, is still another personal cipher. Since he and Brown recorded in Memphis together shortly before Charley Patton and Henry Sims went up to Grafton, it may not be inconceivable that Patton, who frequently referred to Willie in his lyrics might have been kidding Bailey as he sang:

Got up this mornin'
Blues all around my bed
I read a letter
Little George Bailey was dead.

Before crying, "Is this some new audacity for which we're to be grateful?" one might first do away with such old audacities as the widely-accepted "frozen Lemon" theory, which was probably the panic reaction of romanticists to such Jefferson lines as "I got the sense enough to keep warm, because my clothes is so thin."

"CHRISTIANS FIGHT ON" (Your Time Aint Long)



SAM BUTLER'S first Vocalion record is so good you'll wonder where he's been all this time. He hails from down Carolina way where they know how to sing spiritual music. Sam plays a mean guitar in his own way that can't be beat. On the other side he plays and sings "HEAVEN IS MY VIEW," another great spiritual. Hear this record today!

Tell Me How Did You Feel?	1051
Waiting At the Beautiful Gate	73c
Sing with Singing - Rev. J. M. Gates and His Congregation	
Gun to Heaven Anyhow	1052
Playing For the Pastor	73c
Sing with Singing - Rev. J. M. Gates and His Congregation	
Poor Boy Blues	1057
Jefferson County Blues	73c
Sam Butler	
Paul Paul's Sermon	1045
Morning Prayer	73c
Jazz Baby Moore & Co.	

BETTER AND CLEANER RACE RECORDS

Vocalion Records

RE-RECORDING

Manufactured by Vocalion Records, Inc., Chicago

courtesy of Nick Perls

Sam Butler and Bo-Weavil Jackson were the same singer. Butler was at one time thought to be a pseudonym for Sam Collins.

OF ANY HIGHLY-REGARDED BLUES SINGER, Henry (Ragtime Texas) Thomas is surely the least likely to be traced by today's researchers. As the reported object of an intensive but luckless Texan quest, it would seem that Thomas' career, if not life, ended before those of today's surviving Texas singers began. The assumption, however, that he was a native Texan runs contrary to both his musical style and his lyrics. On *RUN MOLLIE RUN*, in fact, he suggests a northern Louisiana origin:

I went down to Haynesville
I did not go to stay
Just got there in the good old time
To wear them ball and chain...
She went down to Boissier City
She did not go to stay...

Another hint is provided by an apparently pointless detour Thomas takes on *RAILROADIN' SOME*, which purports only to describe a trip from Dallas to Chicago by way of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri:

Change cars;
On the T.P. leavin' Fort Worth, Texas;
Goin' through Dallas...Grand Saline...
Mineola, Tyler, and Longview;
Marshall, Little Sandy, Big Sandy,
Texarkana, and doubles back to Fort Worth.

Such a route would take Thomas directly into the Shreveport area. *SHANTY BLUES*, a fragmented sketch of an implied personal brush with the law, begins:

At Delhi and at Eudora (and)
the trouble got rollin' down...
Trouble in Huttig
Out into Marion...
At Doyline lyn' down
My head to the wall...
When I get up ('tween) Monroe
Lord I've got to go...

IT CAN BE SEEN THAT THOMAS was familiar with both northern Louisiana and southern Arkansas, a notion that is re-enforced by other references he seems to make on songs like BOB McKINNEY ("make trouble in Delhi"), *WHEN THE TRAIN COMES ALONG* ("I'll meet you in Wilmot"), and *COTTONFIELD BLUES* ("Just as sure as the train leaves outta that Morabay yard" goin' through Terry Town"). Since "Ragtime Texas" only mentions that state in the most general and grandiose contexts ("I got the Texas blues"), it may be safely said that he was only a Texan in the same sense that J.F.K. was a Berliner.

As the only singer who may actually conform to the legendary "existential" approach by ignoring consistent idea, rhyme, and meter patterns, Thomas interjects a quirkish element (even in his ballads) that would not be found in the blues of a Charley Patton, who is said to have composed his lyrics on paper. In passing, Thomas, describes his job as a heaver of cross-ties (*WOODHOUSE BLUES*), as well as the fact that he had not seen home for 16 years by the time he recorded.

courtesy of Nick Perls



September, 1926: Was this the first recording by a Mississippi Delta blues singer?

ON THE WHOLE, the casual and even awkward, if not obscure nature of many place-references indicate the fact that they can often be of absolutely no help in locating a singer. The state of residency proclaimed by an *AVALON BLUES* constitutes the most atypical of references. Though *NEWSWEEK* magazine could homily conclude "...whom did they find in Avalon tending cows but Mississippi John Hurt?", it could not have written: "whom did they hear had hustled in the Arkansas Delta but Blind Lemon Jefferson?" though the latter sang:

I say a peg-leg woman
She can't hardly get our dough
I left one in Lakeport last night
And I'm sellin' jelly roll

In similar fashion, Buddy Boy Hawkins tells the listener where he has just been, but not from whence he came. Hawkins prefaced his first Paramount records

first Paramount record with: "Listen people, these are my blues: I brung 'em all the way from Birmingham." His 1929 Paramount, *A RAG*, announces: "I come all the ways from Jackson, Mississippi." On the other side of that record, he uses the chorus:

I'm gonna snatch it, grab it,
Anyway I can get it
I'm gonna take it back to dear Isola. (1*)

Though the Delta town of Isola was probably among the places where Hawkins played with Charley Patton (whose voice appears on *A RAG*), before both turned up in Richmond, Hawkins is a stylistic friend only of Memphis or Arkansas performers.

*** (1)** Notice how other old-fashioned singers conform to Hawkins' adjectival boosterism, such as Patton ("I'm gonna move dear old Alabama"), Bo Weavil Jackson ("The red-hot mammas, down in dear old Alabam"), and Willie Newbern ("When I left Memphis, Tennessee, on my way back to dear old Marked Tree").

DURING THE COURSE of *AWFUL FIX BLUES*, recorded at Hawkins' second session, he steals the "mamlish" fetish of Ed Bell, who made his own debut later that month. On *MEAN CONDUCTOR*, Bell obligingly states:

I just wanna blind it
As far as Hamilton
When she blows fore to cross it
I'm gonna ease it down.

Provided that he does not use a contractive form of another town, this reference places Bell close to ersatz double, Barefoot Bill, who publicizes his residence in Greenville, Alabama on *SQUABBLIN' BLUES*.

Bell's *FRISCO WHISTLE* takes him into northern Alabama, as acknowledged in his spoken aside, "Whup it till I get this Trinity train." In the course of his research into blues styles, Gayle Wardlow perceptively noted that BOOKER WHITE, on his *NEW FRISCO TRAIN*, uses the peculiar warbling vocal style typical of Bill and Bell. (1*) Since Booker was originally a resident of northeastern Mississippi, the travels of Bill/Bell may have taken them into that area. Though such deductions are *INFRA DIG* with blues writers who see blues

as monomorphic in character, many of Wardlow's theoretical conjectures such as the one which held that Skip James played in Texas during the 1920's, have ultimately squared with the facts.(2*)



Henry Thomas in 1927. Cezanne-influenced representation by unknown artist is strikingly authentic.

IN FACT, without some A PRIORI stylistic hunch, hometown references will always go undetected by the listener. The apparent allusion of Geeshie Wiley's to the southeastern Mississippi town of Meadville, for example, in **LAST KIND WORDS BLUES**:

What you do, to me baby,
It never gets, outta Mead
I'm leakin' out secrets
Half-across the deep blue sea.

remains inaudible unless one also hears her Texas-like tremolo guitar runs which resemble Sammy Hill's, and which influenced south Mississippi guitarists like Isaiah Nettles. Such links, while convolving, are in no way binding. Hill, for example, sings in a manner which makes him a "soul brother" of Willie Reed; who sings: "Said my baby down in Seguin, poor girl is on my mind." Though obviously from nearby San Antonio, or some other part of Texas, Reed, one of the greatest but least-noticed Texas bluesmen, plays with a vigorous backbeat otherwise found only in the blues of a Delta performer like Garfield Akers.

*(1) On that record, Napoleon Hairiston adds, 'That gives me the blues to go back to Itta Bena,' which, according to Booker, was his home-town.

*(2) One can hear what may have been vestiges of that trip, such as the hum with which James ends his lines on **CYPRESS GROVE**, a la little Hat Jones.

ANOTHER 'POLYMORPHOUSLY PERVERSE' stylist is Tom Dickson, who recorded at the same session as did John Hurt and Mooch (**HELENA BLUES**) Richardson. Dickson's cantabile guitar style suggests that he developed or was influenced by pre-blues dance rhythms. His songs contain ingredients of the Hernando school of blues. Like other singers within the Memphis sphere of influence, he has a Texas tinge to his work. On three of his four blues, Dickson repeats part of the **KEEP IT CLEAN** theme, as played by Charley Jordan, who, according to Big Joe Williams, came from Helena.

Furthermore, the way in which Dickson uses his guitar—his use of octave chording, of full harmonic accompaniment, of guitar breaks, and of relatively elaborate introductions and codas—resembles Skip James' conception of guitar-playing. Skip, who lived in Weona, Arkansas during the early 1920's, would seem to have, while not copy-specific notes, emulated singers like Dickson and Buddy Boy Hawkins in these respects. On **DEATH BELL BLUES**, a Dickson piece that uses the ostinato of Blind Lemon's **BAD LUCK & DRY SOUTHERN BLUES**, a town not far from Weona or Helena is mentioned:

The woman I'm lovin'
Done mistreated me
'Fore I leave Ulm I'm gonna
Meet your friend again.

THE 'MESSAGE' OF A BLUES

SONG and the context of an individual verse, as well as the style of a particular performer, provide another prop for the torpid scribe. An antenna as sensitive as Dean Rusk's is, while certainly no prerequisite, helpful in determining the local flavor of Blind Joe Reynolds' **NEHI BLUES** lyrics. On that record, Reynolds, whom Gayle Wardlow reports has been missing from his old Louisiana Delta haunts for 23 years, sings:

Wish Lake Providence sheriff'd
make these
Women let their dresses down
Told that Wilman soul:
'Doggone what you learnin' in town!"



Buddy Boy Hawkins was a friend of Patton's, but his style and lyrics place him north of the Delta and within the Arkansas-Memphis sphere.

Perhaps the most subtle clue that a singer is using the name of a hometown presents itself in the form of a disruption of a singer's usual pattern. In singing, "Women in Cairo, will treat you kind and sweet," Henry Spaulding drops the 't' of 'sweet', thus anticipating a rhyme with its stressed 'e'. This procedure, combined with an unexpected fluctuation which breaks up his normal vocal timing, alerts the listener for the follow-up: "Hitch you a ride and they'll take you, off Grady." Once again, stylistic factors (Spaulding's falsetto, his nasal singing style, his lack of a bass line, and his snapping of the treble guitar string) would point to an origin either north or west of the Delta. In Spaulding's case, Arkansas, with its closer proximity to the Delta, would seem the most likely choice, since his style is related to that of Hi Henry Brown (reported to have lived near Pace, Mississippi). Yet his discographical information seems to indicate that by the time he recorded, Spaulding was already living in St. Louis, where he is said to have died in the 1930's.

THE RHYMING HABITS of a blues singer are more important than are generally supposed. Critics often attribute secondary of trumped-up meanings to certain verses which were only included to cleverly complete a rhyme. Most singers are so scrupulous about maintaining a terminal rhyming sound in a verse that they will go to any lengths of mis-pronunciation to do so; as, for example, dropping the 's' in 'blues' to match 'do' or 'too'. Whereas a Charley Patton seems to draw out a final rhyming word until he is incoherent or out of breath, he invariably establishes its final sound before dropping it. Thus, when Charley sings 'bed' in **HIGH WATER II** as though it were 'brend' in the verse:

The water it was risin',
Got up to my bed

he is not 'clenching his throat' ('The art of singing lies in the avoidance of rigidity and the adoption of the open throat'—Wm. Shakespeare), but attempting to approximate the sound of his resolving rhyme:

I thought I would take a trip lord
Out on the Pea Vine train.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST IS THE CASE OF KING SOLOMON HILL. Hill originally appeared in the book **COUNTRY BLUES** as A raw Delta cry' in the guise of Big Joe Williams, who could never identify his Hill pieces on the playback. Then it developed that a none-too-subtle British collector had induced this 'post-hypnotic suggestion' of honest Joe's. Two years ago, rumours which held that Hill and Sam Collins were 'just like each other' were started by a friend of mine to 'make things interesting.' Their superficial similarity is, however, mainly positioned on the falsetto voices and the divorced base and treble lines of both men. Those who overlooked the unalterably different picking styles and vocal properties (Hill's voice is thinner and less tutored than Collins') of the two turned speculation into canard by decid-

ing that Hill was Collins. In issuing the Sam Collins album, Origin gave the blues public their chance to create the status quo by establishing a containment policy (Origin surrounded two cuts of Hill's with a battery of Collins' ARC's and Electrobeam Gennetts). For Collins to discard his distinctive blues approach within three months (time enough to record as King Solomon) would probably have caused Art Laibley to dub him as "Plastic Sam."



Ed Bell in 1927...

Though Hill's rhythm is, even more than Collins', noticeably Mississippish, his failure to play melody (except on TELL ME BABY), connects him with singers like Ramblin' Thomas and Blind Lemon Jefferson. In fact, he betrays greater propinquity to Thomas than to any other singer. Thomas not only uses some of the same bass runs as Hill (both patterned after Jefferson), but emulates the bottleneck break of the GONE DEAD TRAIN on his own NEW WAY OF LIVIN'. Hill, in turn, adopts the errant Thomas' self-styled posture as the 'the man who can't stay in one place long' on that record. Just as Thomas buffoonishly calls attention to his negative social image in BACK GNAWIN' BLUES ("They call me 'back-biter'; I AM a back-biter."), so Hill flaunts an absurd view of himself in accepting a ticket agent's claim that he can't be taken seriously:

Says if you go to the Western Union
You might get a chair
(I didn't know the Western Union
rent no chairs)
You might have to wire
some of your people
And you'll probably be stayin'
right here.

BOTH "JOKES" are of the sort one would normally expect from objectified village idiots. (1*) Of more tangible significance is the fact that Hill, in discarding his arresting falsetto on the first takes of WHOPEE and BENDED KNEE, sings in an intonated,

Thomas-like manner. If nothing else, the fact that Hill is able to form blues lines with subordinate clauses would place him closer to singers like Blind Joe Reynolds, Eli Framer, Little Hat Jones and Jefferson than to Mississippi singers who use more sustained notes and hence fewer words per line.

Taken together, Thomas and Hill represent an extremely unsophisticated school of blues singing. In particular, Hill's cacology reminds one of Robert Pete Williams'; he pronounces 'suitcase' as though it were 'suitkey'; 'wife' as 'why'. The off-beat chord progressions of Thomas are highly evocative of those of Oscar Woods, said to have been a Shreveport musician-Hill, virtually unknown to the Mississippians canvassed by Gayle Wardlow, would also seem to have been from the Shreveport area. This conjecture would never have had any basis in fact were it not for GONE DEAD TRAIN.

PAUL OLIVER'S remarks for that record in MEANING OF THE BLUES neatly assume that Hill is not an entertainer but an anonymous tramp whose 'disablement of mind or body' might force him to chisel train rides anywhere he could. The fact that such a conception simply dignifies Hill's personal appeal (1*) to an audience of rounders indicates a 'gone dead' critical approach. Thanks to his obsessive 'will-to-stereotype' (which passes for a 'love of the blues' in Britain), the author can hardly transcribe a challenging country blues lyric.

In the very first line of GONE DEAD, Hill announces: "I'm gonna try to leave here today," which implies that he is travelling (perhaps from Grafton) to an as yet unspecified destination. In viewing Hill as a rootless drifter when he misquotes: "But I decided I'd go down South the last time and take it as it comes," Oliver overlooks the implied object of 'down' which could only be a train stop. In paltering with Hill's rhyme scheme, the goody critic deprives him of elemental common sense as he quotes:

Now some of these people
have gone down today
And this fast train Northern
and Southern
Travellin' light and clean.

Oliveogically speaking, it might be said that a 'light' blues singer would naturally catch a 'clean' train, just as a 'clean' blues singer would look for a 'light' woman. Yet, while Oliver's readers have been peering under the rods for hobo lore, Hill, as shown by a 'clean' transcription of the same lyrics, has been stealthily making his way to Louisiana:

(1) Though both Thomas and Jefferson are jokesters, Hill is not, as seen by his prostration before the 'gone dead train', 'an attitude which is totally different from Lemon's dead-panned account of his 'gone dead pigmeat mama'.

Lord I'm goin' to Minden;
Lord I'm gonna try to leave here today
Southern has a mean old fireman,
And that train is just that way.
...I decided I'd go down to Fryeburg now,
And take it as it comes.
(I reckon the Illinois fireman
and engineer would, too!)

There's so many people,
Have gone down a day
And that fast train North and Southern,
Travels in Bernice and Clay.

SUCH A TRANSCRIPTION

I reflected, properly emphasized rather than avoided Hill's afore-mentioned peculiarities of pronunciation—Minden' was said as if it began with a 'w', while 'Fryeburg' was broken into two disjointed words.

But in attempting to transcribe Hill's lyrics, I only 'happily practice the art of the possible.' I am content to ignore the historical import of this discovery. And the question is not 'Who is King Solomon Hill?', but 'Who am I?', and when I play my Hill records, I am King Solomon Hill. Yet, no one thinks of me as Solomon, with such...tenderness...

TWO WEEKS LATER, I withdrew my account at the Jamaica Savings Bank in protest to their reactionary portrait of 'Banjo Billy', an uncomfortable stereotype. As I glowered at Billy's grinning, wooley-headed visage, I thought: "When Banjo Billy sang, he sang to keep from going insane, just as I protest his portrait, and listen to Solomon Hill to keep from going PSYCHO."

Reality in Minden is kaleidoscopic. Louisiana seemed cold to me. Where did I first get slapped down?

I WROTE to Wardlow suggesting a field trip to Minden and Fryeburg and outlining my ideas about King Solomon's reality; the reality of our times ("King Solomon EST; au fond, King Solomon C'est moi...").

His reply: "Am headed for Minden. One look at the likes of a boulder such as you, Jacques, and we'd both be tarred and feathered, if not lynched."

Jacques Roche, who hails from Malden, Mass., doffed his Khaki Green for 48 intense hours to write the above article. His study, tentatively entitled Country Blues: A Traumatized Nightmare, has been cut short by an extended tour of duty and a suspicious editorial staff. Shortly before leaving for the Vietnamese Central Highlands, Mr. Roach is reported to have said: "Napalm is like Mr. Clean."

The Perfect 100 Race Series —PART ONE

Numerical Listing
by John Godrich

Introduction The series commenced at 101 in July of 1926 and continued until 0335, which is the last traceable number in the series and was probably released in or around July 1935. There was a Perfect 100 issue, but this had no connection with the Race series, and was a dance record released about three years before Perfect 101.

Perfect 101 to 140 correspond to the Pathe 7500 series, 101 appearing on 7501 and 140 on 7540. At this point, around March 1929, the series apparently came to a halt for a while. Presumably this was due in some way to the ending of the Pathe label at this time and the following merger of the Pathe, Cameo and Plaza group of labels to become the American Recording Corporation, or ARC as the group was more commonly referred to among discographers and collectors.

Anyhow, whatever the actual reason may have been, the series apparently restarted again early in 1931 as far as one can judge from available record supplements, but no trace can be found of issues 141 to 146. There are a few other gaps in the listing at this point, namely 151 to 154 and 159. Whether or not any of these ever appeared one can't be sure, but it is possible they did, for 158 turned up for the first time to my knowledge only last year!

At Perfect 160 it was apparently decided to include hillbilly recordings in this series, but it was a very short-lived policy, for they are to be found only on 160 and 164 to 168.

At Perfect 200 an O prefix was introduced, and this continued until the last issue at 0335.

A & B sides—All issues are listed in A and B side order as far as is known.

Composer credits—These are shown where known, either from actual copies or company files, but this information is far from complete and additional data would be welcomed. I am indebted to the 'Record Research' Perfect issue for many of the 100 to 140 composer credits and several of the matrix numbers.

Pseudonyms were sometimes employed and will be identified in the main where they occur, but three occur so often that to save repetition they will be identified here.

Bessie Jackson—Lucille Bogan; Pinewood Tom—Josh White; Sammy Sampson—Big Bill.

Takes shown are from information reported from actual copies. Takes to be found on issues 101 to 131 are false, and should be ignored. They are not shown in this listing.

Release dates are shown beneath the catalogue number and are estimated from catalogue supplements and advertisements in most cases, but also from card file data for which I am indebted to Dan Mahony's copy of Helene Chmura's Columbia card file of a part of this series. Acknowledgements must also go to Bert Whyatt for the loan of this document, and also for the loan of many catalogue supplements, etc.

I am extremely grateful to all the kind people who have supplied take numbers in the form of additions to *Blues and Gospel Records 1902–1942*, and earnestly request your continued cooperation in completing this numerical listing by sending any missing data that you can to—John Godrich, 12, Rockland Crescent, Waun Wen, Swansea. U.K.

101 106735 MAMIE HARRIS—You Get Mad (Mike Jackson)
(7/26) 106736 MAMIE HARRIS—What's The Matter Now? (S. Williams—C. Williams)
NOTE: This is Rosa Henderson.

102 106749 MARY STAFFORD—Ain't Got Nobody To Grind My Coffee In The Morning (Spencer Williams)
106750 MARY STAFFORD—Take Your Finger Off It (Ambrose Bryan)

103 106751 CAROLINE JOHNSON—Georgia Grind (Spencer Williams)
106752 CAROLINE JOHNSON—Mamma Stayed Out The Whole Night Long (But Mamma Didn't Do No Wrong) (Wilson—Razaf)

104 106729 DUKE ELLINGTON'S WASHINGTONIANS—Georgia Grind (Spencer Williams)
106730 DUKE ELLINGTON'S WASHINGTONIANS—Parlor Social Stomp (Duke Ellington)

105 ROSETTA CRAWFORD—Two-Faced Man (8/26) ROSETTA CRAWFORD—Misery

106 31636 MAMIE HARRIS & THE CHOO CHOO JAZZERS—Strut Yo' Puddy (Williams)
31795 MAMIE HARRIS & THE CHOO CHOO JAZZERS—It Takes A Two Time Papa (To Make A One Time Mama Mad) (Jackson)

107 106873 FRANKIE & HER JAZZ DEVILS—You Can't Guess How Good It Is ('Till You Try It Yourself) (Worde—Razaf)
106874 FRANKIE & HER JAZZ DEVILS—Those Creeping, Sneaking Blues (Brown—Frankie)



108 106711 TROY HARMONISTS—Great Scott (Troy-Waller)
106635 FIVE MUSICAL BLACKBIRDS—18th Street Strut (Bennie Moten)

109 106770 MANDY LEE—Rounders Blues (M.Tepson)
106771 MANDY LEE—Wandering Papa Blues (M.Tepson)

110 106992 HOT AND HEAVY—Louisiana Breakdown (Tom Higby)
106993 HOT AND HEAVY—Memphis Rag (Tom Higby)

111 107041 MARGARET CARTER—I Want A Plenty Grease In My Frying Pan (Buddy Christian)
107042 MARGARET CARTER—Come Get Me Papa Before I Faint (Buddy Christian)

112 ZAIDEE JACKSON—Something's Gonna Happen To You
ZAIDEE JACKSON—I'm Mad Because I Turned My Baby Down

113 31582 THE OLD TIME JUBILEE SINGERS—When The Saints Come Marching In (—)
31581 THE OLD TIME JUBILEE SINGERS—That Old Time Religion (—)

114 REV. J.M. GATES—Death's Black Train
REV. J.M. GATES—Amazing Grace

115 107081 REV. J.M. GATES—I Know I Got Religion (—)
107082 REV. J.M. GATES—The Dying Mother And Her Child (—)

116 107090 REV. J.M. GATES—Baptize Me (—)
107091 REV. J.M. GATES—You Belong To That Funeral Train (—)

117 107092 REV. J.M. GATES—I'm Going To Heaven Anyhow (—)
107093 REV. J.M. GATES—Tramping To Make Heaven My Home (—)

118 107044 BUDDY CHRISTIAN'S JAZZ RIPPERS—The Skunk (Buddy Christian)
107043 BUDDY CHRISTIAN'S JAZZ RIPPERS—South Rampart Street Blues (Christian-Fuller)

119 107303 ROSA HENDERSON—Git Goin' (Davis-Grainger)
107304 ROSA HENDERSON—Some Day You'll Come Back To Me (Westfield)

120 107313 LAURA SMITH acc by The Wildcats—I'm Goin' To Have Seven Years Bad Luck (Worde-Razaf)
107314 LAURA SMITH acc by The Wildcats—When A 'Gator Holler (Folks Say Sign O' Rain (Sidney Easton)

121 UNCLE CHARLEY RICHARDS—Levee Blues
UNCLE CHARLEY RICHARDS—Wayward Roamer Blues



122 107315 ROSA HENDERSON—Slow-Up Papa (Razaf-Denniker)
107316 ROSA HENDERSON—Hock-Shop Blues (Sidney Easton)

123 107311 NETTIE ROBINSON acc by The Wildcats—I've Got The Right Man Now (Sidney Easton)
107312 NETTIE ROBINSON acc by The Wildcats—I Never Loved But One Woman's Son (Lukie Johnson)

124 107317 SADIE GREEN—Alley Man (Haul My Ashes) (Jo Trent)
107318 SADIE GREEN—Don't Wear Your Welcome Out (Henderson-Easton)

125 LAURA SMITH—If You Can't Get It Like I Want It Done (I'll Get Somebody Else (A. Booker)
107319 LAURA SMITH—I'm Gonna Kill Myself (M.Jackson)

126 MAUDE MILLS—Somebody's Been Loving My Baby (M.Jackson)
MAUDE MILLS—I've Got The Joogie Blues (E.Dowell)

127 107448 UNCLE CHARLEY RICHARDS—Sore Bunion Blues (Spencer Williams)
107449 UNCLE CHARLEY RICHARDS—I'm Gonna Moan My Blues Away (Richard Yates)

128 SIS QUANDER—Mama Is Waitin' For You (7/27) SIS QUANDER—Mine's Just As Good As Yours

129 107545 ROSA HENDERSON—Black Snake Moan (L.Jefferson)
107546 ROSA HENDERSON—Fortune Teller Blues (Grainger)

130 107543 SIS QUANDER—Black Snake Blues (J.Johnson)
107544 SIS QUANDER—Sould And Body (T. Johnson)

131 KITTY WATERS—Back Water Blues (B.Smith)
KITTY WATERS—Rough House Blues (S.Williams)

132 107580 DEACON MOSE—The Downward Path Is Crowded (Mike Jackson)
107581 DEACON MOSE—Climbing Up Zion's Hill (Haywood-Dupree)

133 BLIND BOBBY BAKER & HIS GUITAR—Macon Georgia Cut Out
BLIND BOBBY BAKER & HIS GUITAR—I'm Saving It All For You
NOTE: It is rumoured that this is Bobby Leecan, and that composer credits confirm this, but I have so far been unable to substantiate this.

134 ROSA HENDERSON—I'm Saving It All For You
107320 ROSA HENDERSON—Gay Catin' Daddy

135 107789 ROSA HENDERSON—You Can't Have It Unless I Give It To You (A.Razaf)
107790 ROSA HENDERSON—Dyin' Crap-Shooter's Blues (Grainger)

136 107618 DIXIE JAZZERS WASHBOARD BAND
 -My Old Daddy's Got A Brand New Way To Love
 (M.Jackson)
 107617 DIXIE JAZZERS WASHBOARD BAND-
 Memphis Shake (H.Clifford)

137 107835 KITTY WATERS-Mean Old Bed Bug
 Blues (J.Wood)
 (1/28) 107836 KITTY WATERS-Loud And Wrong
 (T.Delaney)

138 107791 ROSA HENDERSON-Police Blues
 (Delaney)
 107792 ROSA HENDERSON-Never Let Your Left
 Hand Know What Your Right Hand's Doin'
 (Delaney)

139 107619-2 DIXIE JAZZERS WASHBOARD
 BAND-Kansas City Shuffle (Moten)
 107620-2 DIXIE JAZZERS WASHBOARD BAND
 -Black Cat Bones (Leecan-Cooksey)

140 108670 (3490-a) GRANT & WILSON acc
 Whoopee Makers-Mama Didn't Do It And Papa
 Didn't Do It (Grant-Wilson)
 (5/29) 108761 (3532-B) OZIE WARE acc Whoopee
 Makers-Hit Me In The Nose Blues (Harold Gray)

141 to 146 are untraced

147 9594-1 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS-
 Saturday Night Rub
 (7/30?) 9586-2 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS-
 Black Cat Rag

148 9598-2 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS-That's
 The Way She Likes It
 (7/30?) 9595-1 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS-
 Eagle Riding Papa

149 9582-2 GEORGIA TOM-Pig Meat Blues
 9581-2 GEORGIA TOM-Six Shooter Blues

150 9585-1, 2 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS-
 Somebody's Been Using That Thing
 9596-2 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS-Papa's
 Getting Hot

151 to 154 are untraced

155 9597-1,2 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS-
 Nancy Jane
 (7/31) 9610-2 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS-
 Do That Thing



156 9587-2 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS-Pig
 Meat Strut
 9588-2 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS-Guitar Rag

157 9599-2 SAMMY SAMPSON-I Can't Be
 Satisfied
 9601-2 SAMMY SAMPSON-Skoodle Do Do

158 9495-2 PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHOIR
 OF NORTH CAROLINA-I Love Thy Church
 O Lord
 9498-1 PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHOIR OF
 NORTH CAROLINA-Fight On, Your Time
 Ain't Long

159 is untraced

Son House

Interview—Part One

By NICK PERLS



photo by ARTHUR SINGER

SON HOUSE:
December, 1966.

WHAT DOES SON HOUSE SAY ABOUT CHARLEY PATTON? PATTON'S DAUGHTER? WILLIE BROWN? LOUISE JOHNSON? PARAMOUNT? STELLA GUITARS? THE ALREADY LEGENDARY DEC. 1966 INTERVIEW BY STEVE CALT & NICK PERLS REVEALS IT ALL. HERE IS PART I OF A CONTINUING SERIES IN 78 QUARTERLY... TRANSCRIBED BY NICK PERLS:

Yeah and we had been down to Jackson, Miss. and done some recordings and we done come back from Jackson and so, Charley, he woke up and missed a ten dollar bill and he said that Willie got it. He laid it on Willie and they had a little trouble about that **How much trouble?** Me and him never did have none. **How much trouble did they have?** They didn't do nothin' but argue, and all that kinda stuff. They didn't do no fightin'. Just argue and trick one another and all that kinda stuff. **Did he ever find his money?** No no never found it. Willie didn't have it, somebody else got it. But he just made sure he called us if Willie got it, but Willie didn't get it, another who got it, but he put it on Willie, 'cause they slept in in the same room that night. **Whereabouts was that?** That was another lil' old funny place where he died at **Where Willie died at?** No, Charley Patton. Yeah that was up from ...uh...remember me tellin' you about Charley Patton's mother, daughter... **China Lou?**... Yeah, Charley Patton's daughter...China Lou and her mother...named Millie. Well, that wasn't too far from their home, another lil' old country place. **That was in Boiles, right?** Yeah Boiles, right...right out from Boiles, southeast of Boiles. **About how far?** I'd say...look like to me...I'd say 'bout three, four miles. **Is that on a main road or...?** No, it's off the main road. **A state road?** Yeah, it was a state road. **Was it dirt or paved?** No, you see the Illinois Central... **Runs through there?** And goes all the way through to Vicksburg and around that-a-way, there's a little cut off that comes around from Jackson and then comes into the main road. **Was this town right on the railroad line, Son?** Yeah, this lil' old town was on this lil' old cutoff, you know, they call a lil' cutoff. It wasn't on the main Illinois Central. **I see, but was it a stop at all for trains?** **Trains stop there?** Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, can't call the name of that lil' old town either, but it wasn't too far from Boiles. **Was Charley very careful with his money? Did he lose money lots of times?** No, no, he didn't lose money too regular, 'cause man, he was tight with money. **Oh he was?** Woo, brother, yeah. He'd drink a lot, but thing about it, he'd get it another way, you know. Come to him, spent it and buy what he wanted—he'd hold tight to that money. He wouldn't even give Bertha no money much...the one he had for an old lady that time...the one in Chicago...now she didn't get his money too much. He wouldn't even buy food half the time 'cause she's the cook, and he'd wait on her to come from the white folk's kitchen and bring him his food. That's the way he ate out the white folk's kitchen. He didn't spend anything much. Charley sure was choicy about that. **Was he making a lot?** Uh huh, he was making good. Me and him, that's where we went to playing together. Now, I'd get paid and he'd get paid...I'd spend mine, but he wouldn't spend his. **Let's say, you wanted to borrow some money from him, would he ever lend you money?** Yes...something like a couple of dollars or something. He wouldn't go over that. Too much. No, he's close with money. That's the reason him and his brother couldn't get along so well...Son Patton. No, that's the fault he had of him, 'cause he's so close with money. He didn't want to buy things he really need, aluways trying to work on somebody else...you know...so they just couldn't set horses for that account. **What kind of things would he get out of other people besides food?** Well, now Bertha, see, she'd feed him all the time, so when we'd be down there... when he'd go to see his daughter, well Millie, she had another man then for a husband. **Cliff Toy?** Cliff Toy—man, you hit it right on the nose. That was his name...Cliff Toy, sure was. Yeah, but Cliff, see Cliff wasn't jealous of him, you know, he'd treat him just like he would me or somebody else he didn't know. And he knowed Charley used to be his old lady's old man, see. He knowed that and knowed that was his daughter, but yet and still, he didn't act like he was jealous... just make him welcome and everything...treat him just as nice...whole lotta guys won't do that. See, if they know that she used to be your woman, your daughter, see, he don't want you around too much. But Cliff, he didn't care, you know, he treated him just like a brother. **How often did**

Charley go down there? Well, he didn't go too regular, no, not too regular. Well, do you suppose he had any special reason for going down there? Well, the onliest reason now...when we was together, me and him and Willie, and we come to his house...him and Bertha's...first. Then, we leave from his house and go to Jackson to make the records, then we come back and we played around the country on the Saturday night balls, a little better than a week, and then we get ready to leave there. Then we come back to Boiles, to come back to Lake Carmen, and we would come that far with us, and then he'd say, "Let's stop by Cliff Toy's", and then we'd stop up there like that and spend a little time. But that's as far as he would come with us, and then, he'd go back to where he lived, 'cause he didn't live too far from them, but we'd keep on to... I see. He lived near there? Yeah, he lived near there. Whereabouts, do you know? That's what I can't call the...the name of this lil' old place now that wasn't too far from there. When did Charley move there, do you know? About when did he start living there? Charley started to livin' there, it was 'round about '28... 'tween '28 and '29, somewhere along in there...in the neighborhood of that. I can't be exact when he started living there, 'cause him and Bertha left from up there to Lula, that's where he got her at, and left and went down to this place. Oh I see, that was after he went to Lula? Yeah, that's right. About how long was he living down there in this town? Well, let's see. It wasn't too long, because when we went down to Jackson, he hadn't been down there too long. So, after we made the records for H.C. Speirs, we come back home. It was just about a little better than a week before Bertha sends us a telegram that he'd taken the mumps and died, and knowed by that, he couldn't a been livin' there too long. Did he have any special reason for moving down there? Well, in a way, because, see, his brother and they wasn't too far from that. They was living out on a place they call Dockery's Plantation. Well then, Millie, she wasn't living too far from there either, so he was down in his neighborhood, see. Well now, him and Willie Brown, they near 'bout growed up together down there on Dockery's. That's the reason they had been playing together a good while, you see. They was old acquaintances, and so he's getting in his neighborhood, see, and that's why I say he moved back down there. 'Cause his brother and them, they lived down there, and Millie lived down there. China Lou, she's down there. Would you have any idea if the Toy's could be alive still? Well, that's what I can't be positive of 'cause it's been a long time since I've been down there. I don't know I couldn't say whether they still livin' or whether they dead. What was the age of Patton's daughter, China Lou? At that time, you mean? Oh, China Lou, she wasn't that old... look like to me... I'd say she was about 20, something like that. She wasn't much more older than that. Was she married? No, no, she wasn't married, no. That's the reason I went to liking her. She wasn't married. How'd she like you? She act like she did. Yeah, but I had so many back up there around Lake Carmen and places, I couldn't bring 'em back with me, but I'd talk trash and make I's so crazy 'bout 'em and everything. But I wasn't crazy enough about 'em to want to bring them back, 'cause I had too many up there waiting for me. What about Charley, did he know you went for China Lou? Yeah, he knowed it, yeah. He talk in my favor and everything to her. I wouldn't tell her I wanted to bring her back, tell her I wanted to get married to her or nothing, 'cause I had too many already. Even the same one I got now, we hadn't got married yet, but I was jumping the broomstick with her just the same. We didn't get married until 1934, Evie, but before then I didn't want to get married too fast. Was Charley still around when you married Evie? No, see, Charley he died in... '32, and I married Evie in '34. You were just saying about when you went down to Jackson to make records. How much time did you spend down in Jackson on that trip? I'll say about two days. We were there about two days and then we come back to Charley's... Charley Patton's house. About how many records did you make down there? Three, I think it was...three. They was on a something like "alumastick" what he had...called it, was made outta aluminum, 'cause you play them with a sassafrack wooden needle. Cactus needle? Yeah, they called them sassafrack. We used to gather that stuff and make tea with it, good tea. Sassafrass? Yeah, Sassafrax. That's what we called it. We'd go out, but you

couldn't use it until like this time of year (December) and then everything...the tree leaves and things died, just like the trees is now. Well, it died and that runs the sap back down and then they'd cut the stuff. They really make good tea. So them the kinda needles you play the record with. They didn't call it alumina, but it's just the same thing. They called it something different then, not alumina. I can't call it right now. What would you say was the name of this company that you recorded for? Well, no more than the man's name...H.C. Speirs...Speirs Phonograph Company. That's the way they had it...Speirs Phonograph Company... Yeah, it was 111 North Farish Street in Jackson. Did you ever see any of those records out on sale, or any Speirs Phonograph Company records? Well, I had a couple of them myself. You bought a couple? Yeah. Whereabouts did you buy them? Sent down there to Jackson and got them from him. But now other people, didn't see no other folks have them, 'cause you see, they didn't last long. And he went out of business with it. Yeah, it didn't last too long, 'cause you hafta use them sassafrax needles, and people didn't want to be worried with that stuff. The records you got from him, were they the aluminum ones or the regular black ones? No, they was alumina, you know, but they call it something else at that time. What we call it now, it was alumina. Yeah, that's the way they was. They didn't last too long, so that's the reason he went out of business. Yeah, they'd play, but they wouldn't last too long, 'cause every time you play one day, maybe three, four days, or something, and they'd go all...haywire, and they wouldn't hold up, see, and that's why he had to go out of business. What songs did you buy from him? The last one...let's see now...me and Charley and Willie, we made one together and we uh...we called it...I Had A Dream Last Night Troubled Me...but it was Christian. We made it as a Christian song. And we were playing like that we was sanctified, see, 'cause he wanted some sanctified songs. And me and Charley and Willie, nary a one of us, wasn't sanctified, but we's making out like it, you know, to make the record. Charley, he started that (sings a little)...that's the way we sang it. So on record, people didn't know no better. They figured we's three sanctified guys. We wasn't nothing but ol' whiskey drinkers and blues players. Son, did you ever see that record for sale? No, I never see'd nobody else with nary a one. No, sure didn't. But I mailed him a letter and told him to send me a couple of them, but other people, I never saw nobody else with one. How much time after you recorded did you get the copy of the song? Oh, that was about two or three days. Did Charley have any or was he dead by that time? No, he didn't have none, but Charley, he hadn't died then. So, he heard the records? Yeah, I mailed to H.C. Speirs to rush me a copy. It wasn't too long then, Charley died. I don't know whether he got any of the records or not. Bertha never did say. Did Charley know how to read and write? No, he couldn't read and write. Him and Willie Brown, nary a one, they couldn't read and write. So, you were the only one? I was the only one. Nary a one of them couldn't read and write. What were some of the other titles that you did down there...that you Charley or Willie or the three of you did—besides that song "I Had A Dream Last Night Troubled Me"? Yeah, I can't think of none—it's a lot of little foolish songs...Charley, he'd try to make a record out of anything, you know, 'cause he'd love to clown... "Yeah baby" (imitates Patton)...and a lotta kinda funny stuff like that. We'd let him do all that part. Oh, he made some blues down there? Oh yeah, yeah, he made blues, and so, that song was the one they wanted us to play like we were sanctified. I remember that one, but all that other foolish stuff, I don't know what all Charlie named. He'd name the record anything...you know, to get away with it. What about you, did you make any records down there? Yeah, we played together. No, I mean just you yourself? No, not just by myself. What about Willie? No, No, he didn't either. We's just with Charley see, and let Charley do all the leading and singing the songs, and we'd just comment along with him. He'd take all them old foolish songs and things...some of them would sound allright...some of them had a meaning to them...some didn't. That's the way he played. He'd just say anything, the first thing he could think of... "Heh baby" (imitates Patton) "Aw sho"...and all that old kind of funny stuff. Well Son, I was wondering if you ever said anything to him about it—that he used to clown so much—you or Willie? Oh yeah, we often do that and tell him, too. Say "Charley, you outta stop so much that ol' foolish messin' around." (imitates Patton)—"Oh Man, all I want to do is get paid for it. What's the difference?" I'd say "Yeah, but it just sounds so

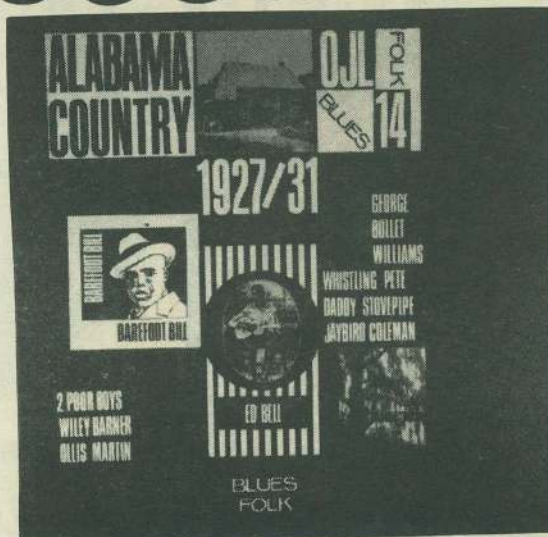
foolish and a lot of junk to it." Patton—"What's the difference, man?" I'd say "OK, that's your little red wagon." He didn't mind if you criticized him? No, no, me and him we played together before me and Willie did. Me and Charley did. At Lula, that's the first place that me and him just played alone. But the other time...no, the first time that me and Charley played together and living there at Lula, and then this man lived at Grafton, Wisconsin that was running the Paramount...like to call his name, it's been so long..You mean Art Laibly? Yeah, yeah. Well, he's on his way through there, and these four boys that made the piece about ...I seen four and 20 elders on their knees...that was a church song...that was Wheeler Ford, Archie, Pockan(?), and Mosely. That's the four guys, and they was good in singing. They didn't have no music. They just sing theirs out. Were they relatives at all of each other? No, they wasn't...just ordinary friends. So they was famous with him. So well, this guy, he didn't record them that year, but Wheeler Ford, he's the one had the car...and so, he's on his way through there going down to Texas...Who was going down to Texas? You just called his name. Art Laibly? Yeah... He was going through to Texas... Yeah, and so he wanted Charley to come back and record some and Charley told him about me. Me and him was playing together. So he told Charley then, he wanted me to come with him in the next recordings. And so, he left \$100. That was for cigarettes and food, and pay Wheeler Ford a little something, 'cause he had the car. And he went on. So, it was about three days after then 'fore we lit out on our way to Grafton. And this girl what was playing the piano...you know, the piece what they was playing last night (Louise Johnson on Paramount)... Louise. So we picked her up. Where did you pick her up? We picked her up at...what this man?...You know him too. You mean Joe Kirby's? Kirby...Joe Kirby. We picked her up there. She was playing for Liny Armstrong, and we got her to come with us. Now how did you happen to pick her up? Who told you? Willie Brown. See, he knowed her. I didn't. He knowed her. So that's the cause but it's supposed to have been Charley Patton's girlfriend. Well, who knew her first?...do you have any idea? Which of the two? Well, I think Willie Brown knowed her before Charley did. Charley, then he got in with her for his girlfriend. And after we left Memphis, Tennessee, on our way to Grafton, we stopped another little place just north of Memphis, and we bought some liquor. And her and him, we all drinkin'...except Wheeler Ford, he didn't drink none. And so they gets in a argument—her and Charley in the car. So she gets out of the front seat and come in the back where I was. That's when it went to happen, and I get a snortin'. She'd take one, kept on riding along. Charley, he's mad. He's sitting in the front. Ride along...I commence to leaning over talking trash to her. I say "I really kinda like you gal." And we take another big swallow. So when we got to Grafton, Charley didn't know that I had done made her, see. So they have a little hotel there in Grafton, where the recorders stay at. And we's all out getting the grips and everything, and so the man come over what attend to the place and giving everybody their keys to the different rooms. So I come up, and they's telling me 'bout "the man done been here and given us all the keys." I said "where did he go, 'cause he ain't give me no key," and so Louise say "Yes he did." I say "No he didn't." Say "I got me and your key." I say "Oh, oh, that's it then." And that's the way it happened. How did Charley take it at that time? Well, he took it pretty good after he found out what heppened, 'cause he knowed she was through with him, see. So he didn't seem like he got mad me of nothing. Me and her stayed together in our little room. So Charley and Willie and this other boy... Wheeler Ford? Lemon. Lemon Jefferson. Like in this room. Charley in the next one, Willie in the next one. Then me and Louise, we had the one that's facing the street. That's the way that was. What was the size of the hotel? Oh, it was two stories. We had the upstairs. How far was it from the studio? Oh, about...I'll say it wasn't quite a mile. Sittin' on a lil' ol' river run by there. It had been an old time factory of some kind.



But they got it and you know, made a studio out of it. But it used to be some kind of old time factory. What kind of car did you come up in? Yeah, it was an old Buick. Did y'all have your instruments with you? Yeah, yeah, we had all them with us. What kind of guitar did Willie play? He played a Stella, and I had a Stella. Charley had a Stella. Charley had a pretty fancy guitar, didn't he? Yeah, yeah, his'n was a little more fancy than me and Willie's. What was fancy about it? Well, you take the head-stall, the neck of it, was made a little different, you know. It had little fancy coils in it and like that. That's the onliest thing that's different about it. Where did he get his guitar, do you know? No, no, I don't know exactly where he got it, to be exact. But we ordered ours. Me and Willie, we ordered ours. Where did you order them from? Ordered them from Chicago. Where did you get the idea to order them? By lookin' in...we used to get these ...catalogs, what we call it at that time, catalogs. And looking in the catalog then...we saw them in the in the catalog. They have records in those catalogs? Yeah. That wasn't Sears Roebuck, or anything like that? Wait a minute...no, it wasn't Sears and Roebuck. Montgomery Ward? That's it. I knew it wasn't Sears and Roebuck. Montgomery Ward. They didn't cost much at that time. What was Willie playing before he got this thing from Montgomery Ward? Well now, I don't know what kinda guitar he had then, because me and him, we hadn't started to playing together. But I don't know what kind he had before then. How much would a Stella cost from Montgomery Ward? Oh, mine cost eleven dollars and so did Willie's. Back at that time. But gee, I bet you couldn't get one now for that. I ain't saw one myself in a long time. Ain't seed a Stella for a long time.

END OF PART I. PART II CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF 78 QUARTERLY!

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LEDELL JOHNSON REMEMBERS HIS BROTHER, TOMMY...

By GAYLE WARDLOW



photo by Gayle Dean Wardlow

Rev. Ledell Johnson—Tommy Johnson's older brother.

Jackson, Mississippi: The tall, skinny elderly man sat on a straight chair under a magnolia tree in his front yard. He leaned back and said: "Yes, I'm Ledell Johnson...and Tommy Johnson was my brother."

Seconds later, I began asking Ledell Johnson, the brother of one of country blues' most famous singers, about Tommy Johnson's life and music.

"Tom, he was four years younger than me. I was born in 1892, so Tom must have been born in 1896. (Other sources list Johnson's birthdate as 1894).

"Now, Tom, he was the seventh child out of 13. First there was Pearly, then Viola, George, Jim, Ida, Ledell (myself), and then Tom."

Tommy Johnson's father was a slave. Ledell remembers that "Daddy was born a Stratton in Atlanta, Georgia, and he was sold to a family in Copiah County, Mississippi, where we were all born. He was sold to some Johnsons—so that's how we got our names."

The father, Idell Johnson (Stratton), married Mary Ella Wilson, who was also a native of Copiah County. Ledell's father died in 1924 in Crystal Springs.

Concerning Tommy's early childhood, Ledell remarked, "I learned Tommy how to play the guitar first. I learned myself from watching my uncle play. I learned Tommy the guitar long before he ran away from home."

When I asked Ledell when Tommy Johnson ran away from his father's farm near Crystal Springs, he said, "Tommy just up and ran away when he was 12 years old with this older woman."

"Tom, he had been working for Mr. Lynfield Redmann down at Terry, and because he was so good a worker, Mr. Redmann gave him a horse and buggy to carry home. My brother gave the horse and buggy to our mother, and it wasn't two weeks later that Tom up and left with this older woman to go up in the Delta.

"She come and got Tommy from Terry, where she lived, and they took off and went up near Rolling Fork. She could have passed for his grandmother. She had a daughter herself as old as Tom was."

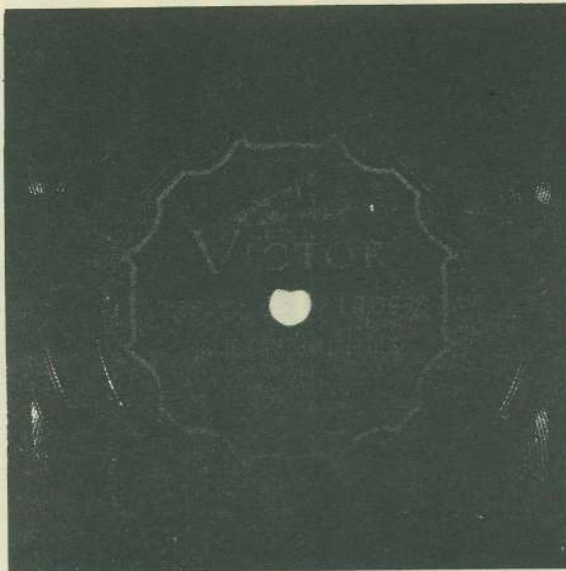
Ledell thinks that the real reason the woman stole Tommy Johnson away from home was that Tommy could play the guitar well enough to make money, and she would get the money. He remembers that the woman's name was Moore.

When I asked Ledell what year this was, he replied that it was 1914. This is confusing: Ledell declares that Tommy Johnson was only 12 when he left home. Yet, Ledell, who also places the date as 1914, said, *"Tommy, he nursed for me after I got married in November, 1912, and that was before he ran away."* In 1914 Tommy Johnson would have been 18.

Tommy stayed up in the Rolling Fork area and in the Delta for about two years. Then, he returned to the Johnson's farm just west of Terry, which is a small town close to Crystal Springs. He then returned to the Delta for a short while, living at Boyle, which is in Sunflower County.

In 1916, Tommy came back to Terry again and married Maggie Bedwell (Campbell) from Terry. Ledell and Tom "stole" Maggie away from her father and took her to Crystal Springs where Tommy married Maggie in Ledell's house.

courtesy of Bernard Klatzko



Who was Maggie Campbell?

When Maggie's father came looking for her, Tom and Ledell hid her, so that she could not be located. Maggie was only 14 at that time and a very attractive young woman.

In the fall of 1916, Ledell Johnson and his wife Mary, and Tommy Johnson and his wife Maggie, all moved to the Tom Sander plantation at Drew, another small Delta cotton town in Sunflower County.

"While we were up there, Tom started playing music with Will (Willie) Brown and Dick Banks," said Ledell.

"Tommy, he played more than I did though, but I was playing a lot in those juke houses or for parties in those days."

When I asked Ledell if he ever heard of anyone named Patton, playing around Drew, he said, *"That guy named Charley Patton came in there at times and we played together. I saw Tommy and Patton play together many times. We all got together and played for jukes or for dances and parties."*

Deep in thought, he continued, *"I didn't see him much, but all three of them guys (Patton, Banks, and Brown) were singing that song about 'Hitch up my pony and saddle up my grey mare, I'm gonna find my baby out in the world somewhere'."*

Ledell remembers that Brown and Patton were about the same age, although Patton was maybe a little older. *"Will, he was married to Josie Brown..."*

Just then, Ledell's wife, Mary, added, *"You know both of them played the guitar. Josie, that's Will's wife, was from Crystal Springs."*

I asked Mary if Will and Josie had any children. She said, *"No, not as far as I remember."*

In December of 1918 (Ledell remembers that the war in Europe had been over one month) Ledell left Drew and returned to Crystal Springs.

Tommy Johnson stayed up in the Drew area for a longer period of time, then came back to Crystal Springs. Then he went to south Mississippi and Louisiana.

Ledell saw Tommy at various times in the next few years in different places. Sometimes the two brothers, along with a younger brother, Majer, played uptown in Crystal Springs in the mid 1920's in front of Thaxton's drug store.

Johnson, like other blues singers of that period, had countless women. Ledell remembers that Tommy had so many wives that Ledell could hardly count or keep up with them.

"Tommy he never kept no woman very long. He had one for a while and then just up and left her when he had a notion. He stayed on the move all the time, moving from one town to another."

When I asked him more about the famed Maggie Campbell, Ledell laughed lightly and said, *"Yes, I remember Maggie. Her and Tommy fought all the time. They would make up and then start right back fighting and arguing again."*

"One night up there in the Delta where they were living, Tom and Maggie got in a bad fight with snow all over the ground, knee deep. She started hitting Tommy with pots and pans, and finally bit him on the ear. Tommy, he got up a runnin' and ran right out the front door in his underwear into the snow with her right behind him chasing him. Both of them were barefooted. A few minutes

photo by Gayle Dean Wardlaw



Rev. Ledell Johnson—75 years old.

later, I looked over there and they were walking arm in arm back to the cabin, already made up."

Johnson had so many wives that it took Ledell quite a few minutes to remember their names.

"He had this woman in Arkansas—I don't remember her name—for a while. Then there was a creole woman named D'Ella, and then Ella Hill; a woman named Emma, who I think was from Tylertown; and there was another woman who lost her mind, Sophronie."

"What about Rosie?" I asked, "one of Johnson's wives that both Ishman Bracey and Johnny Temple remember."

"I remember that name, but I don't remember what happened to her."

"You know, Tom once asked me to go with him to Omaha, Nebraska, to make some records with him, but I never did back him up on his records. I let him make them by himself. (Ledell Johnson often referred to Grafton, Wisconsin, as Omaha.)"

"Tommy, he said that he stopped making records because he sold all his rights, but he stayed drunk so bad and so much, it was hard for him to make any records. That boy would drink anything—bay rum, canned heat, shoe polish, moonshine, Solo—anything that had alcohol in it."

Tommy Johnson would always spend a lot of time talking before he got around to playing songs. Ledell recalls one harrowing incident when Tommy's guitar was "busted up" for just that reason.

"Tommy, he was sitting down at this store, and this white man came along and asked him to play some

photo by Gayle Dean Wardlaw



Rev. Johnson holds Victor record made by his younger brother, Tommy.

piece for him. Tom, he just sat there for a few minutes and kept saying yes; but he never would start the song. After a while the man told Tom to give him the guitar and he would play it himself.

"Well, Tom handed him the guitar and told him to go ahead—I wanna hear you'."

"Well, he made that white man mad, and he just took the guitar and hit Tom right on the head with it and kept trying to hit him with it until Tom got up and ran away from him. Busted that guitar all to pieces."

"So there we were, with no guitar, and we were supposed to play a party down there in South Jackson. We had to go borrow a guitar from someone to play the party that night."

Tommy Johnson had little 'respect' for musical instruments. Ledell recalls "...wasn't nothin' for him to break or tear up a \$50 or \$60 guitar when he got mad at a woman."

When I asked Ledell if he knew how Tommy died, he told me that "Tom was next door at my daughter's house,

Ella Lee Hampton, playing for a party. Been drinking all night and when he finished this last song and the party broke up, my daughter went into the kitchen."

"She heard someone out on the couch, groaning and dying."

"Tom, he was already embalmed before he died. He drank so much of that Solo that it ate his insides up. One pint of that stuff makes a gallon of whiskey. That's what killed him, drinking that kind of stuff."

Solo is a paint remover that has a high alcohol content.

I asked Ledell if the last song Tommy sang that night at the party might have been *Big Road Blues*.

He said, "I don't know what it was, but he sure took that last trip down the Big Road by himself that night."

This year, Ledell Johnson has turned 75. How would you describe him?—As a gentleman who lives a Christian life, is still active, preaches when the opportunity arises, and has a keen memory.

Today, Ledell Johnson sits in the shade under the trees at his home at 1520 Barrett Street in Jackson. He reminisces about events that took place a half-century or more ago—now fragile memories that may be wiped clean by a capricious flow of time that drifts down the unending Big Road of life.

Editor's Note: The information that Tommy Johnson's older brother was still living in Jackson, Miss., was supplied by Ishman Bracey to Gayle Wardlaw in 1964. The fact that Ledell Johnson used two different names made it difficult to track him down. He was found in time to be interviewed for the first issue of 78 Quarterly.

JOHNSON, JIMMIE, AND HIS ORCHESTRA
You Don't Understand V-38094 *You've Got to Be Made*

JOHNSON, TOMMY with Guitar
Big Fat Mama Blues
Big Road Blues
Bye Bye Blues
Canned Heat Blues
Cool Drink of Water
Maggie Campbell Blues

Join That Band Taskiana Fount
I Shall Not Be Moved Taskiana Fount

Jonah in the Belly of the Whale
With His Stripes Rev. F. W. McGee
Rev. F. W. McGee

JONES AND COLLINS ASTORIA
HOT EIGHT

JONES AND JONES—Comedians
Cicero and Caesar—1, 2
Cicero and Caesar—3, 4

JONES, RICHARD M. 1927 WIZARDS


 Tommy Johnson

from the collection of Bernard Kutsko

Tommy Johnson was featured in the 1929 Victor Race Catalog.

78

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LETTERS to the editor

Dear '78'—You obviously have the most creative varitypers and layout men in the business. And for pure funky mould you are leagues beyond your closest competitor—though whether it's Storyville or Ralph Ginzburg I can't say for sure. Your contributors are excellent and well-informed to a man, though Mr. Roche's prolixity seems to increase in direct proportion to the crudity of the lyrics he encounters. Still, from the excellent research and reportage of Mr. Wardlow to the forthright apostasy of Mr. Cohn, '78' was entertaining from cover to cover. The label reproductions alone should give most readers fygygy nightmares well into the coming season—Richard Spottswood, Editor, BLUEGRASS UNLIMITED

Dear Sirs—Your magazine which purports to cover the blues and jazz field, covers neither. It does cover the field of pretentiousness pretty thoroughly however. It confirms something which I've always suspected: aspirants to the business of musical propaganda make bad, out-of-tune noises with typewriters. They have no business aspiring to the music business. A word to you inept guitar imitators, fumbling piano punks, and harmonica washouts: learn an honest trade—J.V. Squires, Paxton, Maine

Volume One, No. 2

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Letters of praise overwhelm 78 Quarterly offices in Brooklyn!



Gentlemen—As a subscriber to your “magazine” I am appalled by the incredible lack of editorial direction and proofreading on the first issue. For your information, I came up with this interesting tally: 28 misspellings, 15 mistakes in punctuation, 13 typographical errors, 5 lines of type missplaced, and 14 historical and other inaccuracies. Considering the elaborate “arts” production you are fostering here, you at least ought to give to give a cursory glance at what’s printed inside—Arnold Blair, Hackensack, New Jersey

Dear Sirs—I would like to direct this letter to you and your readers: Why so much space to musical non-entities? (i.e., Charlie Patton, King Solomon Hill, Tommy Johnson, Charley Jordan, etc., etc.) What or who is the source of your statistical information on rare blues and jazz 78s? Whos is your proof-reader? He is doing an unusual job (“well-done!”)—Paul Digglio, Des Moines, Iowa

Sirs—As a recipient of your mailing piece entitled NO SEX OUTRAGE...In fact you may be dying or seriously ill, I would like you to understand how disappointed I am. You, for example, could not know that I have been hospitalized with spinal meningitis (since the age of eight). You enjoy the benefits of good health...but I don't like to have my face rubbed in it. Responsible adults don't really need the callous, sophomoric humor of a cheap magazine panderer (your price of \$1.50 or \$1.65 or whatever isn't cheap though—it's expensive). This is the major reason why I have not responded with my check of \$1.50 or \$1.65. However, I will agree to separate my personal humiliation from the field of jazz and blues—subject to these conditions: (1) You send at once a copy of your first issue with the understanding that I can accept or reject it. (2) You will not bill me until you receive my decision on whether to keep the magazine. You may wish to take the opportunity of salvaging some of the damage done by your brochure—and salvaging your own conscience. The decision is yours to make. Jim Golaczek, Upper Darby, Pa.

Dear Sirs—As an ex-staff member of The Record Changer (1941-1957), I resent your printing purported letters with such slams as “I took out a three-year subscription in 1957...and haven't heard anything” and, again, in a feature story, such unfavorable digs as “the demise of The Record Changer” and “the failure of its auctions to meet their minimum bids.” After all, I doubt if 78 Quarterly will last out the year, let alone a 16-year span and two major wars —Frank Richardson, Los Altos, California.

Sir—Your Charlie Patton photograph depicting a heart organ with STP, crocodile, and emerging cyclops is extremely B.F. Bad form, old boy, that's the only word for it—John Harrington Sims, Esq., Harrow, England.

Dear Sirs—As a practicing psychiatrist I find your magazine fascinating and extremely bizarre. Most of your readers, if it were pointed out to them, could immediately spot the implied sexuality of such visual objects as record labels (circular and dark)—Elaine Petersen, M.D., Moline, Kansas.

Dear Editor—People who dress regular say I dress funny. They find humor in the fact that I wear day-glo clothes. I do not find myself funny. I do not wish to humble myself before them. Perhaps it is best to establish that at the outset. People I know say your magazine is funny. I look through the pages at certain arresting details. It seems that I spend hours watching one detail while many shades of meaning unfold. Then, after a while, I am gripped by an uncontrollable urge to mirth. One part of me watches a bird-like grin about to pull up one corner of my mouth. I decide to withdraw the grin and the helpless gales of laughter which would inevitably follow. This is because a crowd of people will come running from across the street and gather around me. I can see the certainty of it...people excited over something, sirens, an ambulance, the police. I will hold my mind on your pleasant magazine a few minutes longer, then step safely elsewhere—Paul Hillary, San Francisco, California.

Boys—I think your magazine is pretty O.K. I like the photos too. I have some trouble understanding the big words and the small type. But, I guess you literary fellows will always keep us guessing. I especially like your feature on President Lyndon B. Johnson (I'm sure he's the one you were writing about). Who would have guessed that he is not only a leading collector of 78's but Texas blues singers as well? I agree, he is a great American and is sure doing a fine job for his country—Mrs. Cynthia Johnson, Dallas, Texas

Letters
of praise
overwhelm
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offices
in Brooklyn!



side one—Margaret Whitmire (1927): *Tain't A Cow In Texas/That Thing's Done Been Put On Me* (Charlie Alexander, piano); Mary Johnson (1929): *Muddy Creek Blues/Room Rent Blues* (Ike Rodgers, trombone; Henry Brown, piano); Alice Moore (1930): *Lonesome Dream Blues/Kid Man Blues* (Ike Rodgers, trombone; Henry Brown, piano); Issie Ringold (1930): *He's A Good Meat Cutter/Be On Your Merry Way* (Louis Metcalf, cornet) **side two**—Ma Rainey (1928): *Log Cabin Blues/Hustlin' Blues* (Tub Jug Washboard Band, including Tampa Red, Ga. Tom Dorsey); Lil Brown (1927): *Save My Jelly* (Will Brown, piano); Wilmer Davis (1926): *Gut Struggle* (Albert Nicholas, clarinet; Richard M. Jones, piano; Johnny St. Cyr, banjo.); Priscilla Stewart (1928): *A Little Bit Closer/I Want To See My Baby* (Tiny Parham, piano); Lucille Bogan (1928): *Pay Roll Blues/New Way Blues* (Tampa Red, guitar; Cow Cow Davenport, piano?)



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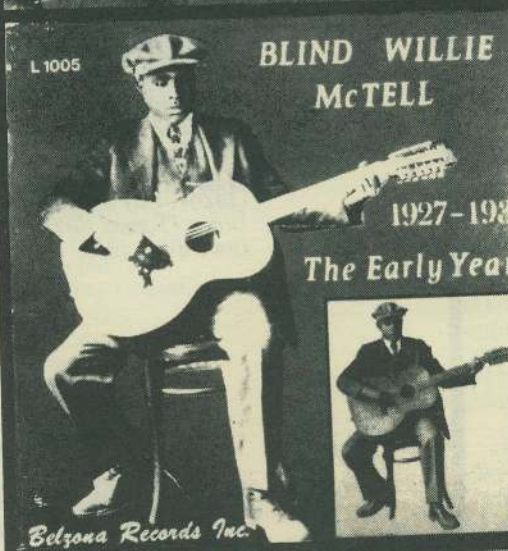
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BUDDY BOY HAWKINS AND HIS BUDDIES, 1927-1934, L-1010—Snatch It And Grab It, Number 3 Blues, How Come Mama Blues, A Rag, Snatch It Back Blues, Raggin' The Blues, Voice Thrown Blues, and also featuring: Will Day, Texas Alexander, Willie Reed, Little Hat Jones, 'Funny Paper' Smith, Blind Percy & His Blind Band—\$4.95—Yazoo Records Inc., 390 East 8th St., New York, N.Y. 10009



*Written from researched
information secured at
Montgomery, Alabama,
March 1967.*

Photo courtesy of Gayle Wardlow

The
BLACK
BIRDS
OF
PARADISE

By Gayle Dean Wardlow



What happened to Alabama's legendary jazz band? Who were they? Gayle Wardlow uncovers surviving members of one of the greatest jazz bands to come out of the Deep South...

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA: The old colored woman said, "Go and see James Bell, if you want to know about old bands. He was one of the original members of that band you're talking about."

Thirty minutes later, I was knocking on the door of Bell's home. Bell came to the door and invited me in. He was medium-sized, brown-skinned, and he looked like a fashionable bartender at a country club.

I hoped that I had found my source of information. I went straight to the point.

"Were you familiar with the Black Birds of Paradise, a band that played here in Montgomery in the 1920's and made records for the Gennett Record Company?"

"Familiar? Of course," said Bell. "I was one of the original members of the band. But those were old days, way on back there."

After more questions, answers, statements, Bell got on the phone and called another original member of the band, Tom Ivery, who lived about four blocks away. He asked Ivery if we could come over and talk to him about the band.

So, armed with an Origin Jazz Library reissue of the Black Birds of Paradise recordings (By Ways of Jazz-OJL-9), we started for Ivery's house.

Ivery, tall and slender, with an air of leadership and a flair for creative conversation, was more like the stereotype of a university professor than a former musician.

Both Ivery and Bell seemed somewhat aloof for the first few minutes of our conversation. Perhaps they wondered about this author's interest in a dance band 40 years in the past.

However, after listening to various cuts of the band on the Origin reissue, Ivery launched full force into the answers I had sought.

The Black Birds of Paradise became a band in 1925, when a group of local colored musicians from Montgomery, coupled with graduates and ex-students from Tuskegee Institute (located at nearby Tuskegee, Alabama), came to Montgomery to seek work.

Originally, there were eight members in the band. They were: Willie "Buddy" Howard, trombone and vocalist; Samuel Borders, drums; James Bell, clarinet, alto and soprano saxophone; Philmore "Shorty" Hall, trumpet; Tom Ivery, banjo; Melvin Small, piano; Walter Boyd, saxophone (tenor); Ivory Johnson, tuba.

Borders, Small, Hall and Bell had all attended Tuskegee and had played in the school band at that college.

The first name of the new band was "The Black Birds." "This was such a common name," said Ivery, "That we decided to change it to the Black Birds of Paradise."

Bell added, "I don't remember who came across that name, or who suggested it, but we all liked it. So we took it."

In 1927, Willie Howard, called "Buddy" for short, secured a recording contract with the struggling young Gennett Record Company of Richmond, Indiana.

The contract was made possible by a Mr. Swett, the manager of a local music store where the group bought and serviced its instruments. Swett contacted Gennett executives in Birmingham, and the company sent one of its talent scouts to negotiate a contract with Howard.

All eight members of the band were required to sign the contract. This was to prevent the band from recording with other interested companies for a certain length of time.

**Gayle Wardlow
uncovers surviving
members of one of
the greatest jazz
bands to come out
of the Deep South...**

One morning in July 1927, the group left for Birmingham and spent an entire day recording at the company's studios located at 1820 Third Avenue South.

"We were all tickled to death," Ivery said of the trip. "We didn't even think anything about the amount of money involved, just that we were having a chance to record."

Bell remembers that "that company was to have paid us royalties, but we never did get any. They said we had to sell so many records in such a period of time, and we could record again."

Rust's *Jazz Directory 1897-1931*, shows six sides as being recorded at the first session, probably on July 9, 1927.

MUDDY WATER, an old song rearranged by the band, was the first song recorded at the session.

BUGAHOMA BLUES, the second song of the session, was named after a rough colored neighborhood in Montgomery, near where the band often played (when it played at Washington Park, a local Negro recreational area).

TISHOMINGO BLUES was a version of an old blues that the band rearranged and improvised to suit its membership.

SUGAR was taken from sheet music that the band had bought at one of the local music stores.

SHIM-ME-SHA-WABBLE, another instrumental, was taken from a dance by the same name that was popular in the 1920's.

RAZOR EDGE, the last number in the session, was another instrumental that was released on the Gennett-produced affiliate label, Black Patti.

Within three weeks, the band was back in Birmingham, recording three more masters for the Gennett Company. Strangely enough, Ivery can't remember the trip. However, an employee of the local music store owned by Swett does remember the band making two or three trips to Birmingham, since he helped to arrange travel expenses.

Rust shows three titles for the second session of August 10, 1927. Two of the masters, *When Jenny Does That Low Down Dance* and *Indiana Mud* (taken from sheet music), were never released.

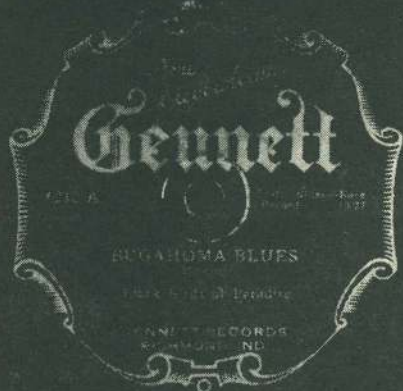
The third title, *Stompin' Fool*, another wild instrumental, was released on Black Patti 8053 with *Razor Edge* on the reverse side.

Neither Ivery nor Bell can recall having seen the Black Patti issue. This particular record was never located by a collector, and is considered to be one of the unfound masterpieces of jazz.

Photo courtesy of Gayle Wardlow



The Black Birds of Paradise: left to right—Willie "Buddy" Howard (trombone, vocalist); Samuel Borders (drums); James Bell (clarinet); Philmore "Shorty" Hall (trumpet); Thomas Ivery (banjo); Melvin Small (piano); Walter Boyd (saxophone); and Ivory Johnson (tuba).



July, 1927, Birmingham, Ala.
This record in E condition has
recorded bids as high as \$75.



The other side. Performances
like this and those by the Frank
Bunch band are considered the
best recorded jazz to come out
of Alabama.

Evidently, the unreleased titles were not issued because of either poor sales, or 'improper' musical quality for what Gennett was seeking from the band in its Race issues.

Looking closely, one can see that the band did two types of numbers. They were either instrumental jazz or dance music with a white background. The titles with the white dance background seem to be the ones Gennett refused to issue.

When the band returned from the recording trips, it went to a photography shop on Dexter Avenue in downtown Montgomery, and had two publicity shots made: one, a still with the band's members posed around their instruments; the other, an action shot similar to those made by Chicago photographers of jazz bands in that city.

Ivery, the publicity-minded member of the band, erected a little sign that said "Exclusive Gennett Recording Artists" and set it on the floor to be included in one of the photographs.

Apparently, the recordings did little to enforce the Black Birds of Paradise's reputation in the central Alabama area. The band already had that part of the state completely in its grip.

Its only competition in the Montgomery area were the Original Alabama Dominoes, a white dance band, and a colored band that Ivery vaguely remembers by the name of the Triangle Harmony Boys. This band also recorded for Gennett.

The Black Birds consistently outdrew both bands, and each week, for a number of years, the band appeared on Saturday nights at the white country club near Harragut Springs, a small resort area on the outskirts of town.



Tom Ivery (above) more than
40 years ago...



Photo courtesy of Gayle Wardlow

Most of the Black Birds' music was based on sheet music that the band had purchased in local music stores. The other songs were made up by the various members of the band.

"We had a bushel of music," Ivery said. "We mainly tried to introduce something new that the people had not heard."

This is the method by which such songs as *Bugahoma* were written. Bell played clarinet on *Bugahoma* and *Tishmingo*, and alto sax on *Sugar*.

Ivery and Bell both agreed that Howard was the best trombonist they ever encountered. "Buddy was an extraordinary trombonist. He played as good with his feet as his hands. He played the slide with his feet to show off. He was just a naturally born musician."

Although members of the Black Birds had listened to early jazz recordings by other bands before they began recording as a unit, both Ivery and Bell felt that this had little effect on their styles.

Notice their closeness to the Frank Bunch sound (also on Gennett)—a Birmingham band, some of whose members were also originally from Tuskegee Institute.

This sound is almost identical in arrangements and ideas. Thus, it must be assumed that the Negro musicians of Alabama were developing their own individual style and sound, just as were the New Orleans musicians who had been developing jazz in that area for a number of years.

Both Ivery and Bell recalled hearing older musicians in their area while they were still youngsters. The styles and approaches played by these older musicians were similar to those used by the Black Birds in their 1927 recordings.

The Black Birds of Paradise: left to right—Willie 'Buddy' Howard (trombone); Samuel Borders (drums); Philmore 'Shorty' Hall (trumpet); Thomas Ivery (banjo); Ivory Johnson (tuba); Melvin Small (piano); Walter Boyd (sax); and James Bell (sax).

What happened to Alabama's legendary jazz band? Who were they? Gayle Wardlow uncovers surviving members of one of the greatest jazz bands to come out of the Deep South...

July, 1927, Birmingham, Ala. *Muddy Water* was one of the most popular songs of the late 1920's, and this is probably the best version of it.





The Triangle Harmony Boys (recorded July, 1927, Birmingham) are recalled by Ivery as a rival band in the Montgomery area.

This Alabama jazz style may have evolved from street bands or college and school bands that had been a part of the Negro school education in Alabama's larger towns.

One summer, the Fess Whately band of Birmingham, with the Bunch brothers as members, paid a visit to Washington Park in Montgomery. The two bands engaged in a marathon "jam and battle" session that lasted for hours.

Ivery remembers that it was a close contest, but that in all truthfulness, audience applause made the Whately band a slight favorite.

"But we both got paid the same amount, and that was what counted," Ivery said, amused.

In 1930, the band arranged a tour of the middle west, beginning in Texas. This tour caused the first break-up in band membership.

Ivery did not want to make the trip, since he had a steady job as a postal clerk. Others, who had full-time jobs, also did not wish to make the trip.

Actually, Howard was the only member of the band who made his living by music alone. The rest of the unit had full-time jobs.

The band, under Howard's leadership, finally broke up in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1931, when Bell and others who did make the trip returned to Montgomery.

Howard stayed in Omaha and played with other bands in that area. He subsequently formed a band of his own.

(It might be interesting to speculate on whether Howard became a member of the Frank Perkins band, a local Negro jazz band in that city. This group appeared on Gennett's subsidiary label, Champion, and was recorded in Richmond, Indiana in 1931. Perhaps Howard was the connecting link in securing a recording contract with Gennett if he was with the band at that time.)

By the deepening days of the Depression, the Black Birds of Paradise had disbanded. The members who stayed in Montgomery became part of a new band—the Black Diamonds—under the leadership of Bell.

This band is considered by some in the Montgomery area to have been a better unit than the outfit that spawned it. Unfortunately, it never had a chance to record.

At present, three members of the original Black Birds of Paradise are deceased. They are: Johnson, Small, and Boyd.

Howard is still living in Omaha, and Hall is active in music in North Carolina. Borders was last heard from a small town in California.

Bell has only recently retired from the music business, but he is still actively employed as a top-notch brick mason. He resides at 1209 Roanoke Avenue in a fashionable Negro neighborhood.

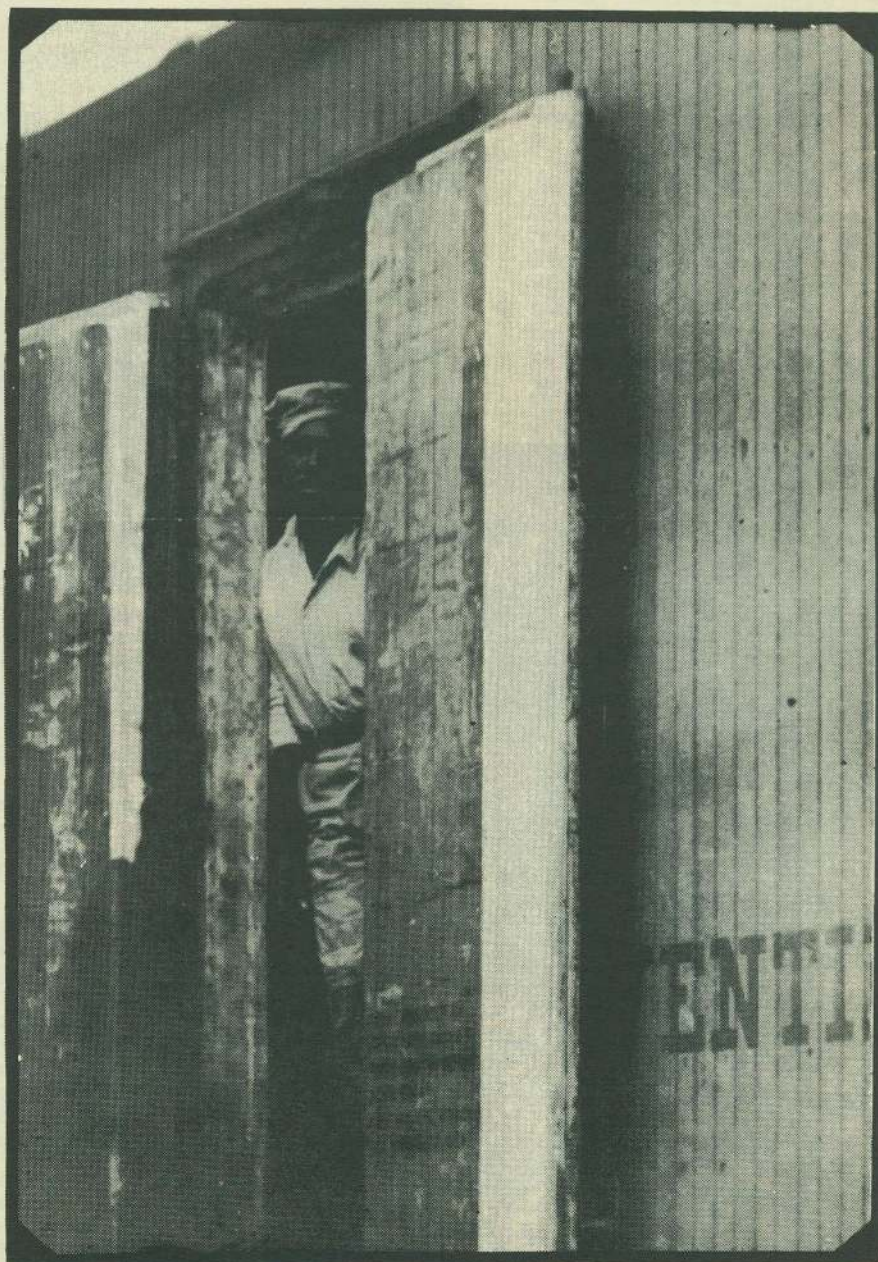
Ivery has now retired from the U.S. Government Postal Services, and he lives close to Bell at 1200 Thurman Avenue.

Ivery summed it all up in these words. *"We were a pretty good little juke band, even if I have to say so myself."*

HENRY STUCKEY:

By JACQUES ROCHE

An Obituary



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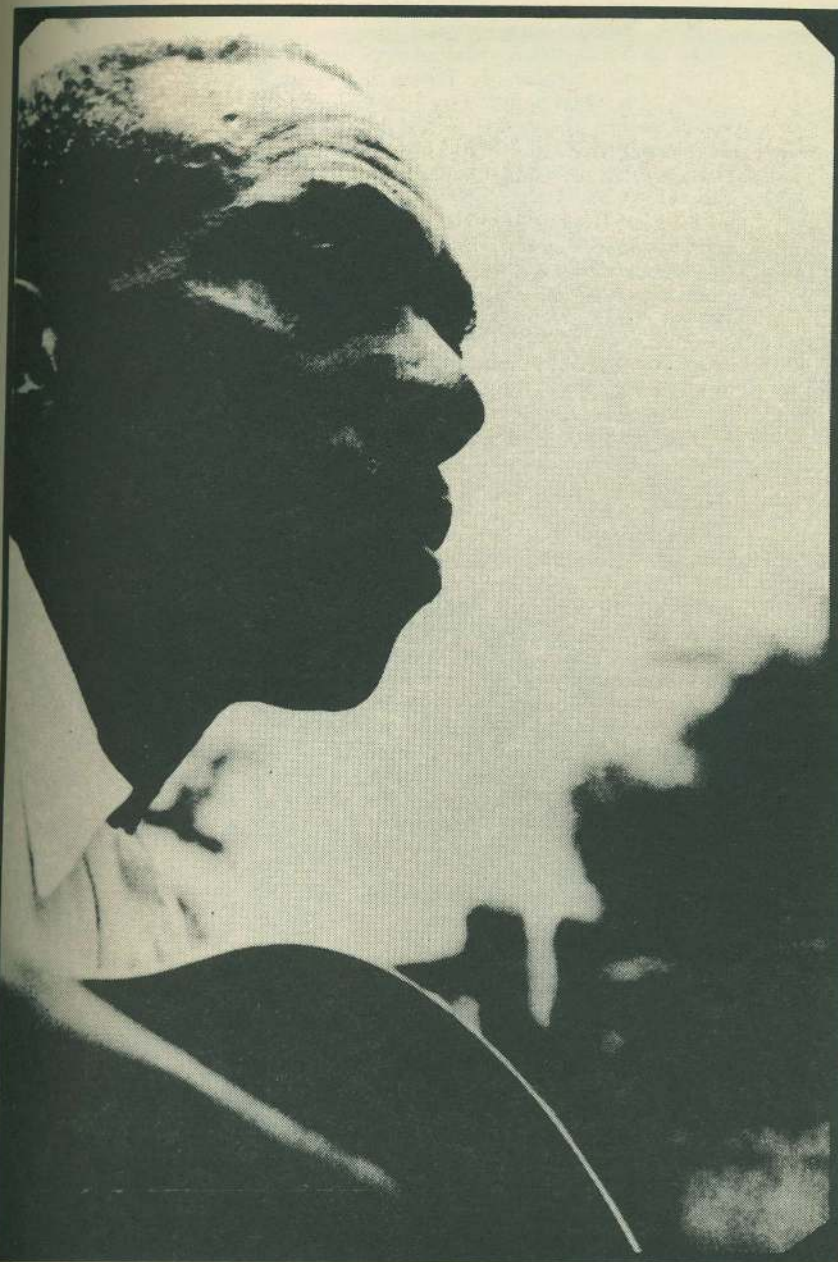
**'Father' of the
Benton, Mississippi
'school of blues' and
teacher of young
Skip James...
What was he like?**

Today's strange state of affairs, which brings the rural blues singer acclaim for ethereal but earthy qualities he never intended to cultivate, and then gives him a commercial brush-off, prevented the public recognition due Henry Stuckey before his death on March 9, 1966. Referring to the gushy compliments and reviews that have beset him since his rediscovery, Skip James once remarked: "You can't live off air puddings. Henry knows that, too; he's too smart for these slicks who talk you into studying the music racket again." At Mr. Criswell's plantation in Sartartia, Mississippi, where Gayle Wardlow discovered him early in 1965, Henry Stuckey both laughed off and shrugged at the concert success of his former protege, matter-of-factly commenting: "I can play just like him."

Henry Stuckey, according to one who saw him play, had a "beautiful, deep voice, but was so ugly I couldn't bear to watch him long." Although it is difficult to assess the worth of a bluesman whose music was never made public, Stuckey's reputation was such that H.C. Spiers, when interviewed by Wardlow, still remembered him from the 1920's. Even at that, none of his discoverer's overtures to record companies produced an encouraging response.

"How old is this singer? In his sixties?" an Electra secretary peevishly wanted to know. "Well, we can't speculate on every kid that comes along with a tape recorder; we backed one kid once and he never found a single blues singer. Send a tape." Since word got around that the Library of Congress' unctuous impresario paid only in cokes, blues singers have also been unwilling to speculate on the promise of 'sending a tape'. On the premise that even a 'has-been' country blues artist merits closer scrutiny than any would-be blues 'interpreter', the following data in regards to Stuckey has been compiled by Gayle Wardlow and myself.

Henry Stuckey, born in the 1890's, saw his first guitar in 1904. A year later, he took up that instrument. Between 1907 and 1909, the young Skip James wandered into a Benton, Mississippi jukehouse to watch Stuckey and an older musician, Rich Griffith (also deceased), accompany a fiddler who was playing *Drunken Spree*. Though that title is still part of James' repertoire, Stuckey had completely forgotten it some 55 years later. Upon his return from the war in



Skip James, pupil of Henry Stuckey and Bentonia's most famous progeny, is probably today's greatest country blues performer...

1917, Stuckey taught James how to play guitar. The style he is said to have shown Skip was built around ragtime pieces like *Salty Dog* ("The old version") and *Stack O' Lee*, all played in the key of G. Soon, Stuckey was pirating Skip out of his house at night, when, unbeknownst to the James family, the pair played in nearby barrelhouses. Stuckey, who towered over his young partner, served as a general bodyguard at such times.

As many as a dozen musicians worked around the Bentonia area during that period (Stuckey himself had a brother, Shuke, who "played better than Henry did.") "I'd follow them like the pied piper, all over town," Skip reports. James learned some local pieces, in-

cluding a version of *Slidin' Delta* ("They'd have a real deep, sad sound even when they were rapped or frailed"), and then quit playing guitar for a year to "study" what he had seen and learned. From that point on James's music—such as his early composition, *All Night Long*—started coming from "within", though some songs, like *I Looked Down The Road*, still retain an older, possibly local, touch.

The school of blues-playing developed by James on his Paramount recordings could be designated "Bentonia", for Skip, now falsely billed as a "Delta" bluesman, adhered to no distinct regional style: e.g. Delta. Only James and Blind Joe Reynolds, among the blues singers who count, were so musically isolated. Both men were among the most eclectic of blues singers. Whereas some blues singers like Tommy Johnson (whose *Coal Black Mare*, a piece in Spanish tuning, was learned by Skip) appeared in nearby Flora during the early 1920's, the music played by Skip and Henry Stuckey never spread out of Bentonia. Within Bentonia, both James and Stuckey set out to destroy all their competition.

These two men performed whenever Skip happened to be in town. ("I never got into anything or anyplace too deep or long; that's why I reckon they call me Skip.") Both picked their Stella guitars with three fingers and played in "cross-note" tuning. When the first country blues records came out, they "studied" some of Blind Lemon Jefferson's pieces, as well as those of later artists (like King Solomon Hill), but only for the purpose of "playing them better." Today, Skip will reluctantly perform a few such acquired pieces, like *Jack O'Diamonds*.

In neighboring towns like Pocohantas, James was not adverse, Stuckey recalled, to singing his blues on Saturday night and going "up the road" to preach on Sunday. Neither married man stayed home at night: "We treated our wives in any kind of way," said Stuckey. Both readily acknowledged their excessive drinking: "I was trying to be a 'man', so quite naturally I was a habitual drunkard," James said. According to James, Stuckey was an expert and wiley craps shooter: "I never would join a game with Henry when he shot those craps with strangers." In his own right, Stuckey was an entrepreneur who would, rather than hire himself out to house parties (at which food and admission prices made up the musician's fee), rake in the entire profit from his own parties in Sartartia. "He'd do most anything to get out of work. Henry always liked to take it easy—you'd always find him out hunting or fishing somewhere."

Stuckey, in turn, when asked if Skip worked as a youngster, replied, "His mother sure did. Hah!" The personal attitude of each rediscovered man towards the other was totally patronizing, and somewhat conspiratorial in matters pertaining to music and other Bentonians. Skip, when referring to past local violence directed against himself, would validate his remarks by saying:

**'Father' of the
Bentonla, Mississippi
'school of blues' and
teacher of young
Skip James...
What was he like?**

"Henry Stuckey could tell you about it." Stuckey, on the other hand, would only snicker at Wardlow's then-relayed accounts.

Even when James made the Bentonla scene, their respective sidelines often sundered the pair. However, Stuckey was able to confirm the fact that Skip's *Cherry Ball* was composed at his Grafton session. He was familiar with many of Skip's compositions, like *Cypress Grove* and *Devil Got My Woman*, a piece he said had been once known locally as *Devil's Dream*. He remembered Skip's unrecorded *Crow Jane* and *Catfish* ("an old song") from the 1920's. Of *Special Rider*, he said: "A woman died while singing that song." While Stuckey knew little about the development of Skip's piano style, he sometimes backed up his piano-playing on guitar.

During the 1930's, Stuckey ran a barrelhouse in the Mississippi Delta ("He got as far as Belzoni," said Skip). At that time, he met Charley Patton, whose style, he, unlike James, personally appreciated.

In 1935, James came back from Texas and happened to pass by a party at which Stuckey was playing. Although Skip had, for the most part, quit playing blues since his recording session, he teamed up with Stuckey that night. Earlier that same day, Stuckey said, someone had recorded him. No record of a Stuckey session exists. James remembered that particular house party, but maintained that his own involvement was minimal and that, not having wished to "make a show" or intrude on Stuckey's performance, he tactfully waited until other Bentonians threw a party in his honor before playing in public.

James soon went on to Alabama but, in the late 1940's, returned to Bentonla with his second wife, and once again took up blues-singing with Stuckey. Henry's cousin, "Sport" Stuckey, threw parties every Friday night at which the two entertained, while James' cousin, Lincoln (Buddy) Polk of Yazoo, ran a cafe in Bentonla which featured both men. Another cousin of Stuckey's, Burd Slater, also played locally and performed some of their songs, although James reports that he had a predilection for "Muddy Waters stuff." Stuckey and James also accepted invitations from friends to play for nearby Delta parties. Once, Stuckey recounted, both men saw Kid Bailey playing in a Delta barrelhouse, though the incident is not remembered by Skip.

Soon, Stuckey was advising James to go up North, where musical opportunities seemed greater. To James this meant living in a 'reprobated' city like Chicago which he felt should be 'wiped off the map'. Nevertheless James, who disliked his job residency in Sartartia, suddenly left with his wife in the early 1950's. Yet, tiring of the travelling required of a musician, he then abandoned his brief comeback altogether. Stuckey in turn went up to Omaha and found work as a band guitarist. They never met again.

At the time of his discovery by Wardlow, Stuckey was living in a barren, one-room shack with his wife, daughter, and grandchild. ("I imagine his luck must have struck tough in the North.") Blandly, Stuckey indicated that his Delta barrelhouse operation had netted him more money than his Omaha career. Despite a plantation strike in 'tense' Leland which took place at the time of one interview, Stuckey remained characteristically relaxed. His affable and reserved demeanor suggested that of a Delta rather than a Yazoo County resident. In discussing his erstwhile friend, the older man didn't seem to believe in or comprehend Skip's transformation from his "foolish" days on the Whitehead plantation. Just the same, Stuckey, while lacking James' ambition to travel, record, and take up the ministry, nevertheless exhibited the same detachment from his surroundings and contemporaries which made Skip, by his own description, "an odd fellow."

Puffing on a cigar, Stuckey, who had kept up with James' career through the 'grapevine' (Skip's cousin in Yazoo), stated, "I'd like to meet him again. I was up in the Delta in the fifties and heard somebody playing .22-20 in a house. When I went inside, I only found a phonograph record." James, who "wouldn't play in Bentonla again for \$10 a minute," had, just before receiving news of Stuckey's death, been discussing an eventual visit to Sartartia to see him.

(Any reliable person who would be willing to assist Gayle Wardlow in his efforts to record other, still-living discoveries should contact him at Box 1525, Meridian, Miss.)

Skip James' best-known country blues performance, 'Devil Got My Woman', is still played and sung in Bentonla today—and little changed from this 1931 recording.



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**WINSTON
HOLMES:
Kansas City
PROMOTER**

By DOUG JYDSTRUP

New facts behind the famous "Lena" Kimbrough/Paul Banks session on Meritt— and how Holme's special hobby paid off...

some notes

By DOUG JYDSTRUP

Most record collectors around the world like the music that came from Kansas City in the 1920's, '30's, and even into the 1940's. For most collectors, it is the familiar names of Moten, Lee, Jesse Stone, Alphonse Trent, and Williams that capture the imagination. Several years ago, when I began to dig for the roots of Kansas City's jazz and blues, the name most frequently mentioned by the old timers was one we seldom hear—Winston Holmes.

Holmes was the only real promoter the Kansas City Negro musicians ever had, and the part he played in this role puts all collectors in his debt. Without his efforts, some of the above musicians would never have been well known. He was aggressive in booking name bands in town, arranging band battles, concerts, recording dates. Where there was music to be promoted and money to be made, Holmes was there.

The truly legendary record label he produced, "Meritt", is scarce even in Kansas City which was the primary outlet. Holmes had only 400 records pressed of a master at one time, and at least one record never got beyond the first pressing.

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**New facts behind
the famous "Lena"
Kimbrough/Paul Banks
session on Meritt—
and how Holme's
special hobby paid off...**

Two of the three known religious Meritt records he produced seem the easiest to find; yet, the biggest seller on Meritt was 2201 by Lena Kimbrough, singing solo on one side, *City Of The Dead*, then joined by her brother, Sylvester Kimbrough, on the other side in one of their popular numbers, *Cabbage Head Blues*.

"Lena" is actually Lottie Kimbrough. Why Holmes chose to label her as "Lena" is not known. He knew her and her family well, and she was under contract to him at the time. (While married to William Beaman, Lottie also used his last name for records.)

To promote Meritt 2201, Holmes had photographs taken of the group that made the record. He gave the photos away to customers who bought the record, and he had them tacked to walls around the 18th Street bars and dance joints.



These Kansas City recordings by "Lena" Kimbrough on Winston Holmes' own label, Meritt, are actually by Lottie Kimbrough (and her brother, Sylvester Kimbrough. Colors are black, gold, and white. Later Meritt issues were purple, gold, and white.



"A" PHOTO: left to right—C. Banks, W. Holmes, E. Kimbrough, P. Banks, and S. Kimbrough. This photograph was used to publicize the "Lena"/Sylvester Kimbrough/Paul Banks Meritt 2201.



The unknown "B" PHOTO: left to right—W. Holmes, E. Kimbrough, S. Kimbrough, P. Banks, and C. Banks.

The day the photos were made, Lottie was sick. However, her sister, Estella, was conveniently in Holmes' store to stand in for the picture taking. Winston Holmes himself also acted as a stand-in for the pictures, since Simon Hoe, who played clarinet on the session, did not show up. Because the "action" photo shown here has been known for many years, and since Holmes is shown playing the clarinet, this photo may have led to the belief that Holmes was a musician. But, he did not play any instrument, including guitar, for which he has also been given credit.

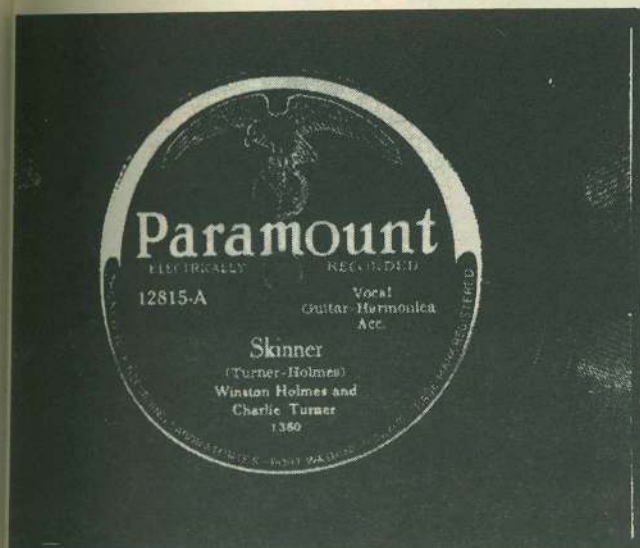
One night, three years ago, a lady phoned me. (Several months before, I had knocked on her door, asking for old records, musical artifacts, and other related items.) She announced that she had finally found the 'stuff' she had told me about, and that I could come over to look at it any time I wanted. This proved to be a tremendous find. Among many other items, she produced the second photo shown...and "off" take!

She had been present at the photograph-taking session, had been very close to the Kansas City blues scene, and had owned items of interest to anyone concerned with the important community of obscure blues people in the area. She led me to Estella Kimbrough, who was then alive, and Estella confirmed every detail of the session. She provided the proofs of both photographs as well as a copy of the record, *Meritt 2201*.

Estella was not a singer or musician, as had been the rest of the Kimbrough family, but she had a clear memory of the days when "those kids were making records and singing in taverns." She, too, remembers Holmes as being a first class promoter who would do anything to get his musical interests before the public.

There is no evidence that Holmes promoted any other Meritt record as actively as he did 2201, and he protected himself by putting the principals who made it under contract. Both Lottie Kimbrough and Paul Banks (who died in early 1967) were signed by Holmes, and the faded signatures of the people who witnessed the signing reads like an index of the important blues and jazz musicians in Kansas City in the 1920's.

Photograph "B" was not used to promote this record. Holmes himself was an avid photography fan. He was often seen carrying a camera with him to dances, recording sessions, etc., and had he not been so interested, the "off" take picture might not have been preserved for our benefit 40 years later.



from the collection of Bernard Klatzko

Holmes "sings" with blues singer/12-string guitarist Charlie Turner on this 1929 Paramount.



from the collection of Nick Perls

Holmes "sings" with Lottie Kimbrough on this great 1928 country blues performance.

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"Like Nero,
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desire in life
is to possess
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extreme
beauty
and value."*



78 PRESENTS The Rarest 78s

Once again, 78 QUARTERLY examines the scratchy shellacs. A number of well-informed readers took vigorous exception to the "known copies" portrayed in the first issue. (In fact, a number of readers took vigorous exception to the entire "program" enumerating these rarities.) However, the series will continue, despite meaningful advice from "friends" and the demeaning tone of those anonymous notes (you know who you are out there), characterized by psychotic 1940's Palmer Penmanship in green ink and on blue-lined tablet paper.

In many cases the "only known copy" turned out to be the only copy known to the compiler out of some four or eight or 15 existing copies.

*—H. Goering (Rominten Forest, 1944)

78 PRESENTS The Rarest 78s

In other instances, "three known copies" acted as a catalyst to unleash a nuclear holocaust: and those weeks rained a vengeful fury of Jimmy Blythes, Lovie Austins, Garfield Akers, and Ezra Buzzingtons upon the unidentified body of the hapless compiler.

Without wishing to redirect the blame, the writer acknowledges that his accociate in this feature (nameless, of course) was at the time involved in a separate research project. That much of his statistical work later proved to be fraudulent in both this and that other research project he was working on (*The Economic Recovery of U.S. Naval Glue from The Scales of New World Herring*) should be taken into account.

This gross situation is being recouped by a vigorous note of conservatism. Starting with this issue, the word "estimated" will replace the phrase "known copies."

Our special thanks go to Kenneth Hansen, Henry Henriksen, Jim Lindsay, Bob Mantler, Henry Vestine, Max Vreede, Gayle Wardlow and many others for their response to this feature. Gayle Wardlow sent some 15 photos of Super-tones on the little-known 2000 series. Henry Henriksen mailed a detailed list of possibilities and omissions to the A-B Section. These include blues singers Byrd & Glover on Gennett 7040, Clara Burston on Gennett 7319, Champion 16125, 16216, and 16756, and Paramount 13003, Sunny Boy & His Pals on Gennett 6106, and the following jazz bands: Ezra Buzzington's Rustic Revelers on Gennett 6894, Baby Aristocrats Band Gennett 6198, Johnny Burris & His Orchestra Gennett 6850, Walt Anderson & His Golden Pheasant Hoodlums Gennett 6342, the Blythe's Blue Boys on Champion 15,000 series, Clesi's Areoleans Gennett 6061; plus the Sammy Brown Gennett and the legendary Blythe & Burton and Blythe & Clark sides (scheduled to appear in the coming *Rarest Piano 78s*).

Omitted from this feature, but making their appearance in the third issue of 78 QUARTERLY will be a listing and estimates of the rarest piano 78s.

HERE IS 78 QUARTERLY'S OFFICIAL (but unauthorized) POLL OF THE RAREST COUNTRY BLUES AND INSTRUMENTAL JAZZ RECORDS

THE RAREST COUNTRY BLUES—
C-D LISTING: Joe Calicott *Fare Thee Well Blues/Traveling Mama Blues*—Brunswick 7137 (estimated less than 10 copies) Bunny Carter *Midnight Special Blues/It Won't Be Long*—Conqueror 7266 (one known copy; estimated less than 5) Chicago Sheiks *Beedle Um Bum/Selling That Stuff*—Superior 2798 (estimated less than 5, but musically poor) Big Boy Cleveland *Quill Blues/Goin'*



To Leave You Blues—Gennett 6108 (estimated less than 10) James Cole *I Love My Mary/(Bradley)*—Champion 16308 (estimated less than 5) James Cole *Mistreated The Only Friend You Had/(Buster Johnson)*—Champion 16718 (estimated less than 5; one unconfirmed copy) Walter Cole *Mama Keep Your Yes Ma'am Clean/Everybody Got Somebody*—Gennett 7318 (estimated less than 5); Champion 16104 (estimated less than 5) Jay-bird Coleman *Mill Log Blues/(Jelly Roll Anderson)*—Gennett 6226 (estimated less than 5; 2 known copies)

The Rarest 78s



Jaybird Coleman Man Trouble Blues/
Trunk Busted—Suitcase Full Of Holes
—Gennett 6245 (estimated less than
5) Jaybird Coleman Ah'm Sick And
Tired Of Tellin' You/No More Good
Water—Gennett 6276 (estimated less
than 5) Jaybird Coleman Coffee
Grinder Blues/Man Trouble Blues—
Columbia 14534 (estimated less than
15) Sam Collins Yellow Dog Blues/
Loving Lady Blues—Gennett 6146;
Black Patti 8026 (both estimated
less than 10) Sam Collins The
Jail House Blues/Riverside Blues
—Gennett 6167 (estimated less than
15); Black Patti 8025 (estimated
less than 5); Herwin 92043 (est-
imated less than 5) Sam Collins
Devil In The Lion's Den/(Jelly
Roll Anderson)—Gennett 6181
(estimated less than 5) Sam Col-
lins Dark Cloudy Blues/Pork
Chop Blues—Gennett 6260 (est-



imated less than 5) Sam Collins
I Want To Be Like Jesus In My
Heart/Lead Me All The Way—
Gennett 6291 (estimated less than
5) Sam Collins Midnight Special
Blues/Do That Thing—Gennett
6307 (estimated less than 5) Sam
Collins Hesitation Blues/It Won't
Be Long—Gennett 6379 (estimated
less than 5; one known copy) Sam
Collins The Jail House Blues/
Pork Chop Blues—Supertone 9291
(estimated less than 5) Teddy
Darby My Laona Blues/Lawdy Lawdy
Worried Blues—Paramount 12828
(estimated less than 10) Teddy Darby
Lose Your Mind Blues/What Am I To
Do?—Paramount 12907 (estimated
less than 5; probably jazz instrum-
ental acc. and belongs in another
listing) Teddy Darby Deceiving
Blues/Built Right On The Ground
—Victor 23311 (estimated less 5;
2 known copies) Blind Willie
Davis I Believe I'll Go Back Home/
Trust In God And Do Right—
Paramount 12979 (estimated less
5) Mattie Delaney Down The
Big Road Blues/Tallahatchie
River Blues (estimated less than
5) Slim Duckett and Pig Norwood
Sister Mary Wore Three Lengths
Of Chain/You Gotta Stand Judge-



The Rarest 78s

ment For Yourself—Okeh 8871 (estimated less than 5; no known copies) **Slim Duckett and Pig Norwood** I Want To Go Where Jesus Is/When The Saints Go Marching In—Okeh 8899 (estimated less than 5 copies) **Willie Dukes** Sweet Poplar Buff Blues/(?)—Champion 16745 (estimated less than 5) **THE RAREST INSTRUMENTAL JAZZ C-D LISTING:** California Poppies What A Wonderful Time/Lou—Sunset un-numbered (estimated less than 5) **Hoagy Carmichael and His Pals** One Night In Havana/Star Dust—Gennett 6311 (estimated less than 5); Champion 15420 (estimated less than 5) **Carmichael's Collegians** March Of The Hoodlums/Walkin' The Dog—Gennett 6474 (estimated less than 10); Champion 16453 (estimated less than 5) **The Cellar Boys** Wailing Blues/Barrel House Stomp—Vocalion 1503 (estimated less than 15) **Champion Rhythm Kings** Sweet Georgia Brown/(Howard Thomas) Champion 16387 (estimated less than 5) **The Chicago Loopers**

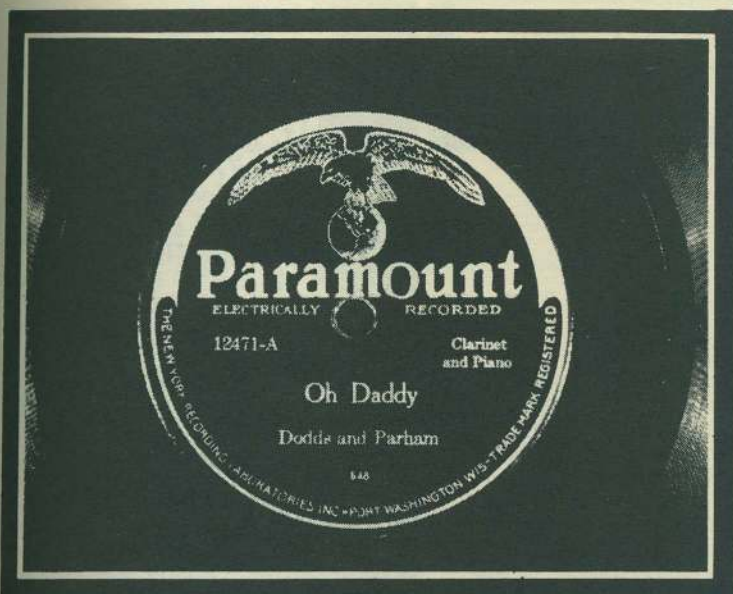


Clorinda/Three Blind Mice—Perfect 14910 (estimated less than 15); **Pathe** 36729 (estimated less than 5) **The Chicago Stompers** Wild Man Stomp/Stomp Your Stuff—Champion 16297 (estimated less than 5) **The Chicago Stompers** Richmond Stomp/(State Street Ramblers)—Champion 16350 (estimated less than 5) **The Chocolate Dandies** That's My Stuff/When I Take My Sugar To Tea—Vocalion 1617 (estimated less than 15) **The Chocolate Dandies** Loveless Love/One More Time—Vocalion 1610 (estimated less than 15) **Buddy Christian's** Creole Five Sunset Blues/Texas Mule Stomp (estimated less than 10)—Okeh 8311 **Buddy Christian's** Creole Five Sugar House Stomp—

Okeh 8342 (estimated less than 15) **Buddy Christian's Jazz Rippers** South Rampart Street Blues/The Skunk—Perfect 118 (estimated less than 10); **Pathe** 7518 (estimated less than 5) **Junie Cobb's Hometown Band** East Coast Trot/Chicago Buzz—Paramount 12382 (estimated less than 10) **J.C. Cobb and His Grains of Corn** Endurance Stomp/Yearning And Blues—Vocalion 1204 (estimated less than 25) **J.C. Cobb and His Grains of Corn** Shake That Jelly Roll/Don't Cry, Honey—Vocalion 1263 (estimated less than 25) **J.C. Cobb and His Grains of Corn** Smoke Shop Drag/Boot That Thing—Vocalion 1269 (estimated less than 25) **Jesse Cohen and His University of Wisconsin** Skyrockets Dizzy Corners/Postage Stomp—Paramount 12642 (estimated less than 5) **Jesse Cohen and His University of Wisconsin** Skyrockets It's A Sin/Slow Beef Paramount 12641 (estimated less than 5) **Cookie's Gingersnaps** High Fever/Here Comes The Hot Tamale Man—Okeh 8369 (estimated less than 15) **Cookie's Gingersnaps** Messin' Around—Okeh 8390 (estimated less than 15) **Cookie's Gingersnaps** Love Found You For Me—Okeh 40675 (estimated less than 10) **Wallie Coulter and His Band** Good Stuff/Hollywood Shuffle—Gennett 6369 (estimated less than 5) **Wilton Crawley and His Orchestra** Big Time Woman/She Saves Her Sweetest Smiles For Me—Victor 23292 (estimated less than 10) **Wilton Crawley and The Washboard Rhythm Kings** New Crawley Blues/I'm Her Papa, She's My Mama—Victor 23344 (estimated less than 10) **Chas. Creath's Jazz-O-Maniacs** Butter Finger Blues/Crazy Quilt—Okeh 8477 (estimated less than 25) **Creole Jass Band** Tack 'Em Down—Victor Test Un-numbered (no known copies) **Jack Danford and His Ben Franklin Hotel Orchestra** Alabama Stomp/On The Alamo—PRCSF Un-numbered

from the collection of Bernard Klatzko

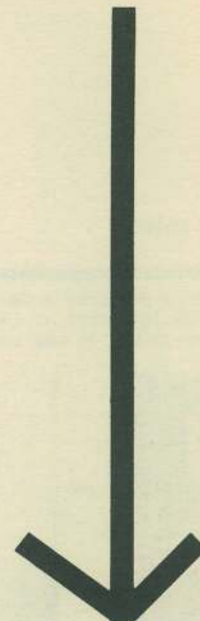




(estimated less than 5) **Jack Davies' Kentuckians Sick O' Licks**/(Robinson's Knights of Rest)—Champion 16607 (estimated less than 5); **Superior 2610** (estimated less than 5) **Voltaire De Faut Wolverine Blues**/(Morton)—Autograph 623 (estimated less than 10) **Harry Dial's Blusicians Don't Give It Away/Funny Fumble—Vocalion 1515** (estimated less than 15) **Harry Dial's Blusicians I Like What I Like Like I Like It/It Must Be Love—Vocalion 1567** (estimated less than 15) **Harry Dial's Blusicians When My Baby Starts To Shake That Thing/Poison—Vocalion 1594** (estimated less than 15) **Duke Diggs and His Orchestra Black And Blue Rhapsody/Nightmare—Supertone 9487** (estimated less than 5) **Duke Diggs and His Orchestra After You've Gone/St. James Infirmary—Supertone 9653** (estimated less than 5) **Paul Davis and His Orchestra Black And Tan Fantasy/Underneath The Harlem Moon—Champion 16524** (estimated less than 5) **Dixie Boys Poplar Street Blues**/(The Rag Pickers)—Autograph Un-numbered (estimated less than 5) **The Dixie Serenaders When It's Sleepy Time Down South/River, Stay Way From My Door—Champion 16341** (estimated less than 5); **Superior 2748** (est-

imated less than 5) **The Dixie Serenaders St. Louis Blues—Cho-King—Champion 16365**, **Superior 2771** (both estimated less than 5) **Dixieland Thumpers There'll Come A Day/Weary Way Blues—Para 12525** (estimated less than 15) **Dixieland Thumpers Oriental Man/Sock That Thing—Para 12594** (estimated less than 10) **Dodds and Parham Oh Daddy**/(Dixon and Channey)—Paramount 12471 (estimated less than 10) **Dodds and Parham Loveless Love/19th Street Blues—Paramount 12483** (estimated less than 15) **Johnny Dodds' Black Bottom Stompers Weary Blues/New Orleans Stomp—Vocalion 15632** (estimated less than 15) **Johnny Dodds Hot Six/Johnny Dodds Trio Goober Dance/Indigo Stomp—Victor 23396** (estimated less than 10) **Down Home Serenaders Mean Dog Blues/Cootie Stomp—Champion 15399** (estimated less than 5).

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE: THE RAREST PIANO, A to E! COMING SOON—THE RAREST JUG AND STRING BANDS; THE RAREST BLUES WITH JAZZ ACCOMPANIMENT.



JUST OUT!



THE MISSISSIPPI BLUES NO. 3: TRANSITION, 1926-1937; —OJL-17: FEATURING—Hambone Willie Newbern—Roll & Tumble Blues, Dreamy-eye'd Woman Blues; Robert Johnson—I'm A Steady Rolling Man, Sweet Home Chicago; Johnny Temple—Big Boat Whistle; Blind Joe Amos—C & O Blues; Skip James—Cherry Ball; Bo Weavil Jackson—You Can't Keep No Brown; Big Joe Williams—Stepfather Blues; 49 Highway Blues; Mississippi John Hurt—Stack O' Lee Blues; Mississippi Bracy—You Scolded Me & Drove Me From Your Door; I'll Overcome Someday; Mary Butler—Mad Dog Blues; Rosie Mae Moore—School Girl Blues; Bertha Lee (with Charlie Patton)—Mind Reader Blues—\$4.98—ORIGIN JAZZ LIBRARY, P.O. BOX 863, BERKELEY, CALIF. 94701

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From the back cover
of OJL-15...

began to use a very beautiful song. There are many, many gems contained in this LP and I could not find nice things to say about all of them.



r) Henry Brown, Romeo Nelson, Cow Cow Davenport

more compli-

We have, courtesy of Pete Welding

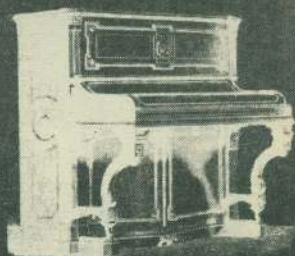
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RAGGED PIANO CLASSICS 1923/43, OJL-16... FEATURING: Sugar Underwood, Smith and Irvine, Blind Leroy Garnett, Blythe & Burton, Blythe & Clark, Herve Duerson, Frank Melrose, Rob Cooper, Alonzo Yancey, George H. Tremmer, Will Ezell, Sidney Williams, Clarence Jones—\$4.98—Origin Jazz Library, P.O. Box 863, Berkeley, Calif. 94701

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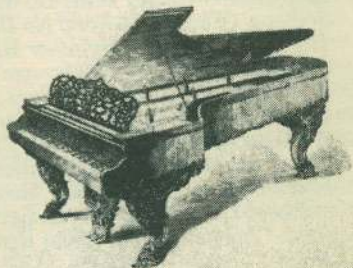


1927-39

OJL-15

Black Diamond Twins
Blythe And Burton
James Wiggins
Romeo Nelson
Henry Brown
Skip James
Cripple Clarence Lofton
Cow Cow Davenport
Blythe And Clark
Frank Melrose
Sammy Brown
Jesse James
Jim Clark
Cripple Clarence Lofton

RAGGED PIANO CLASSICS



1923-43

OJL-16


Blythe And Burton
Sugar Underwood
Sidney Williams
Alonzo Yancey
Herve Duerson
Will Ezell
Blind Leroy Garnett
Blythe And Clark
Smith And Irvine
George H Tremmer
Clarence Jones
Frank Melrose
Rob Cooper

Mississippi John Hurt, 1963—Volume 1 of the original Piedmont Recordings "Folk-songs and Blues"—Avalon Blues, Richland Women Blues, Spike Driver Blues, Salty Dog, Cow Hooking Blues, Spanish Fandang, Casey Jones, Louis Collins, Candy Man Blues, My Creole Belle, Liza Jane—God's Unchanging Hand, Joe Turner Blues—\$4.98—Origin Jazz Library, P.O. Box 863, Berkeley, Calif. 94701

Mississippi John Hurt, 1964, Volume 2 of the original Piedmont Recordings "Worried Blues"—Lazy Blues, Farther Along, Sliding Delta, Nobody Cares for Me, Cow Hooking Blues No. 2, Talkin' Casey, Weeping and Wailing, Worried Blues, Oh Mary Don't You Weep, I Been Cryin' Since You Been Gone—\$4.98—Origin Jazz Library, P.O. Box 863, Berkeley, Calif. 94701


Did you miss these great Mississippi John Hurt performances the first time around?

MISSISSIPPI JOHN HURT, 1963

Volume I of the Original  Recordings "Folksongs and Blues"



MISSISSIPPI JOHN HURT, 1964

Volume II of the Original  Recordings "Worried Blues"



An interview with

CARL MARTIN

photo by Pete Welding



"THE CHICAGO STRING BAND", June, 1966.
Left to right: Carl Martin, violin; John Wrencher,
harmonica; Johnny Young, mandolin; John Lee
Granderson, guitar.

Pete Welding interviews the almost forgotten performer behind the growing legend of great 1930's country blues...

One of the more interesting, yet least known, country blues musician to record in the mid-1930s was Carl Martin, an accomplished singer, mandolinist, violinist, guitarist, and string-bassist, on all of which instruments he performs with equal proficiency. Beginning with a session for Victor's Bluebird series in Chicago on Oct. 27, 1934, at which two titles were cut, "You Can Go Your Way" and "Kid Man Blues," Martin participated in six additional sessions from January of the following year through mid-April of 1936, for Okeh, Vocalion, Bluebird, Decca and Champion. Among these were such memorable performances as the wry "Good Morning, Judge," "Crow Jane" (an extremely popular and much recorded piece), and the fine topical song "Let's Have a New Deal" (reissued on Blues Classics 14, the only one of Martin's 12 selections currently available on LP). In addition, he participated in a number of recording dates led by such Chicago-based blues performers as Big Bill Broonzy, Tampa Red, and Bumble Bee Slim (Amos Easton), and backed up his close friends and long-time playing partners Howard Armstrong ("Louie Blue") and Ted Bogan on their March, 1934, Bluebird recordings.

Through the help of singer-guitarist-mandolinist Johnny Young, both Martin and Bogan were found early in 1966 in Chicago, where they have lived since 1932. The interview with Carl that follows was conducted at my home in Chicago on May 31, 1966.

I was born in Virginia—Big Stone Gap, Virginia—in 1906. We were a large family; I had three brothers and numerous sisters...yeah, about eight or nine.

My father was a stone-mason but he was a good musician too. Played violin and guitar. He played a violin all the time, mostly played at parties around there; he'd get out with the fellows and play. They used to call him "Fiddlin' Martin." He never did make any records; 'way back then there wasn't any recording. My brother was a musician too. He was a wizard; played violin, all string instruments—named Roland Martin. He was six years older than me. He was my daddy's first wife's son. He was born in Spartanburg, South Carolina; that's where my daddy was originally from.

The way I got to play—fellows would come by and play the guitar; that's mostly what they would play back there then. The only things you would see was the plectrum banjo, the fiddle and the guitar... and you could see a mandolin occasionally. But that's all. Where I was, it was a coal-mining region; fellows would come through there with a guitar—mining men—and they'd stop over at our house and I'd watch them play. I was just a little boy, and I learnt to pick up a piece or two.

I was raised up in Knoxville, a big city. I had been born in Big Stone Gap but we left there when I was 12 years old and came to Knoxville and from then on I call that my home. That's where I really learnt to play. A lot of fellows had showed me how to play. See, my brother Roland had a string band, and that's where I mostly learnt to play because, after he found that I could hit a note or two on the guitar, then he asked my father to let him teach me how to play, so my daddy just turnt me over to him. And I didn't want to learn, 'cause I wasn't studying about no guitar! But I couldn't whup him, 'cause he was bigger than I was, so he made me come home after school and sit down and study. Then he got on the train—that was in Knoxville, Tenn.—got on the train and went to Asheville and brought back a guitar my size. They had a 12-string guitar; that was too big for my hands.

See, I'd come home after school, I'd sit down and practice the guitar. Wasn't two weeks before I was playing in the band. Blues? That was simple! Playing

in that string band in two weeks. They had a bass fiddle, had mandolin, violins...had all instruments, so I learned to play different ones by being around them and, I guess, by being musically inclined. I'd pick up everything I could see.

Now, he had four pieces in his string band: guitar, violin, mandolin and bass. Roland, he played the violin most all the time, but he could play all those others too. He played that old music—you know, country music. He played every kind of old breakdown number you could think of, played any of them. And he was blind too. I never seen a man beat him playing the violin, and I've seen some violin players! And when it come to that old kind of music! They wouldn't let him get on no kind of contest, no sir! They'd let him play but they wouldn't let him be in the contest. I never saw anyone to beat him playing. I never could understand him, to save my life, but he learnt to play. He could even make a sound in his head—humming like—that'd be just like a violin. It'd be making music just like it was a string instrument, like a violin; you could even record it. I don't know how he did it and I never saw anybody else in my life who could do it. It would be just like you were playing a violin, playing the melody in your head just like a violin. Never knew what it was. He was a natural musician. Played for both white and colored, and he traveled all over, went all through Virginia and West Virginia, Kentucky, and all down South.

The string band worked every day. They went out every day in the week; Back there then they'd pick up 20, 25 or 30 dollars every day. Just go out and play, stand on the corners, on vacant lots—all different places—play all day. Play for medicine shows. That was right around World War I, 1918 or so. We played on sidewalks, streets, in stores, anywhere. Fellows would go on vacation and I'd go right with them and play music for them; they'd dance. Be gone with them for a week or two. Played everywhere all through the mining area of Kentucky; everywhere they knowed me, men would see me playing...

I played bass fiddle too. I recall once a fellow gave me ten dollars, said, "You're the best bass fiddle player I ever heard." I played when I played—whatever it was, guitar, bass fiddle, I played! Then I went to playing the violin.

(During the 1920's, Carl continued this pattern of traveling and performing, and by the late '20s had formed a four-piece unit with his friend Howard Armstrong who, like him, played violin, mandolin, guitar and bass, and with various other musicians.)

First record I ever made, I made in Tennessee, in Knoxville. It was called The Vine Street Rag. It was me and Howard, about four of us there, recorded Knoxville County Stomp and The Vine Street Rag. The fellows beat us out of the record, though; that's what discouraged me from lots of recording because—it was Brunswick—they beat us out—a fellow called Brown. The record was supposed to be under my name but he put his name on it. He told me his name was Brown. This was before '32, 'way back before then. We made the record and that fellow, he told me, he said, "Now in a month you'll hear from me." When the record came out, I heard it on the vendor, but my name wasn't on it.

The versatile Carl Martin played guitar, mandolin, bass, and here, violin...

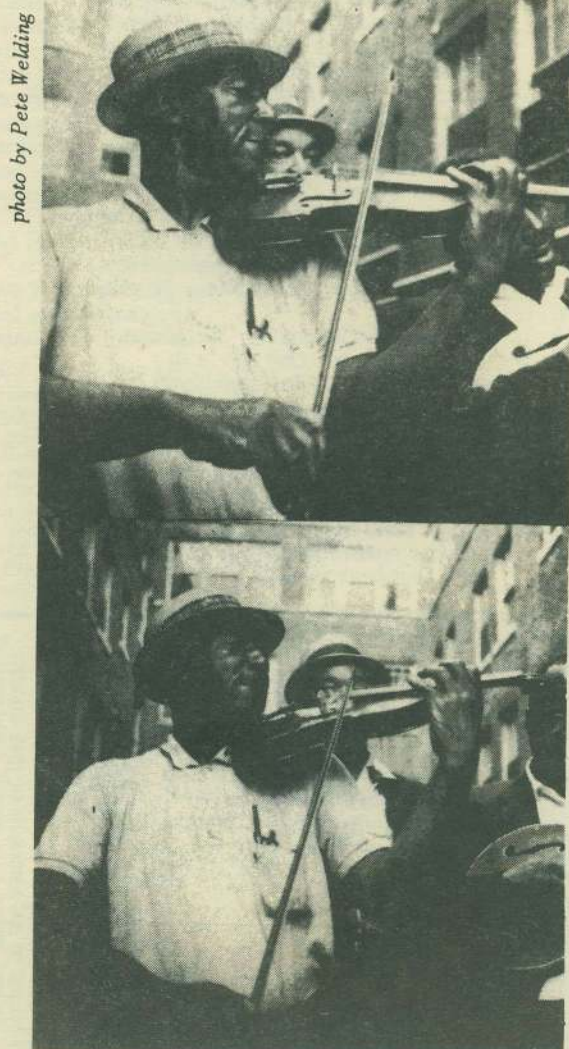


photo by Pete Welding

photo by Pete Welding

**Pete Welding
interviews
the almost
forgotten
performer
behind the
growing legend
of great 1930's
country blues...**

That must have been around '28, somewhere in around there. Me and Howard and Roland and another fellow—it wasn't Ted (Bogan); I don't believe I had run up on him then—recorded those numbers in the St. James Hotel in Knoxville. Brunswick had their outfit there, they had come through there. They wrote us letters; if we had any talent, music and like that, they were going to put the studio up in the hotel and for us to come up there. We went up there and we made the pieces. They know when the record's right. They had wax; they make it on the wax. When they put that wax away then he said, "You'll hear from me in a month." He never did write back and so I did said to myself, "Well, they beat us out of the record." I heard that record but I had to pay to hear it, on the vendor. That discouraged me right then, you know, from making records.

I came to Chicago in '32. It was four of us came. One boy's in Detroit now, Howard Armstrong; he's a bad man on the violin, I'm telling you, a bad man...can play anything on the violin. Me and Ted stuck together. The other boy, William Ballinger, he's playing bass violin in a band—some bigger band took him away from us. He was something too; he could really pick that bass violin.

We played anything, popular songs, anything they called for. We played for churches, for all occasions. When you play music for your living you play what the people want; that's the way I always tried to figure for myself. Anything they want—if it was weddings, dances, breakdowns, churches, anything they sent for me to come and play. That's why I

learnt to play so well, 'cause I practiced all kinds of music. Then when I came to Chicago, I go in the Polish neighborhood, go in the Irish neighborhood, I go in the German neighborhood, go in the Italian neighborhood; I had to learn to play all their musics. I go down to Lyon & Healy's (a Chicago music store) and pick up the music and come back and sit down and learn it. I learnt read music and I can get it off the sheet.

Way I got to record there, a fellow called Melrose heard me, came to me. Bumble Bee Slim and them was recording with him back there then—Big Bill and all them fellows—and we got together and we was practicing, rehearsing together, and so Melrose heard me, so he got me to go down to record. Fellow called Williams, I went down to him and recorded too. I made some records with Bumble Bee Slim, but I forget what they was now—Bumble Bee Slim and Big Bill, and I made some with Tampa Red. I can't remember what I played in those days. I just played with him (Tampa Red)—his numbers—but I don't remember what they was, but I played with him, though.

It was about five or six years ago that I gave up music, maybe even longer than that. See, I played music for a living; I like to play. Now when I was in the Army, I kept the morale up; I practiced and went around there playing. They told my sergeant, "Don't let Martin come around here when we're having contests. He wins all the first prizes." Now that mandolin I have, the Army gave me that. And I had a Gibson guitar, a fellow bought and gave me. I kept the morale up when I was in the Army.

from the collection of Don Kent



Chicago, September 4, 1935: This Decca ranks in excitement with some of the best blues performances of the late 1920's on such labels as Paramount and Gennett...



courtesy of Laurence Cohn and Frank Driggs

Above, Tampa Red in the late 1930's. He, along with Big Bill and Bumble Bee Slim, recorded with Carl Martin in Chicago at this time...

I always liked music and wouldn't do anything but play music, but it looked like there wasn't any demand for it. The syndicate took over the vendors, jukeboxes, things like that—that's a lot of discouragement to musicians. You know, you can't play here. I used to play in theaters before they put in loudspeakers, talkies, and a lot of places I used to play where you're barred out now. You go in and the fellow tells you, "Don't need music, we got music." Well, okay, there's a vendor there—but look at the musicians that's walking the streets and they can't get in. That discouraged me, too, a whole lot. 'Cause I could have been playing music right around here still, but you can't fight the syndicate, and I know it. See what I'm talking about?

AFTERWORD: Though he had not performed professionally for more than a half-dozen years when I met him early in 1966, Carl was in splendid vocal and instrumental shape. This was due to the fact that he and Ted Bogan, still fast friends, were in the habit of getting together from time to time for an evening's music making, at which times they would play and sing for their own enjoyment. It was at such a session at Carl's South Side apartment that I first met the pair one

evening. I was treated to several hours of their mandolin-guitar renditions of such ballads as "Red Sails in the Sunset" before they would deign to perform blues. Apparently they felt impelled to convince me of their musical sophistication; certainly they kept deferring my request for blues as though they couldn't believe that I would be interested in such music. Finally, though, I got Carl to sing and play "Crow Jane"; from there on it was easy, and they performed blues for the rest of the evening.

Prior to leaving Chicago in June of 1966, I recorded Carl twice. At the first session he accompanied himself on mandolin and guitar, with the support of Johnny Young, who alternated in playing these instruments with him. That day—May 31, 1966—Carl performed: "Crow Jane Blues," "Corinna," "Trouble on your Hands," "Your State Street Pimp" (a piece Bumble Bee Slim had recorded as "Running Bad Luck Blues"), "Mistreatin' Blues," "Everyday I Have the Blues," "Gravedigger Blues," "Liza Jane," "John Henry," "Frankie and Johnny," a tentative "Good Morning, Judge," and a fragmentary version of "Goin' Back Home."

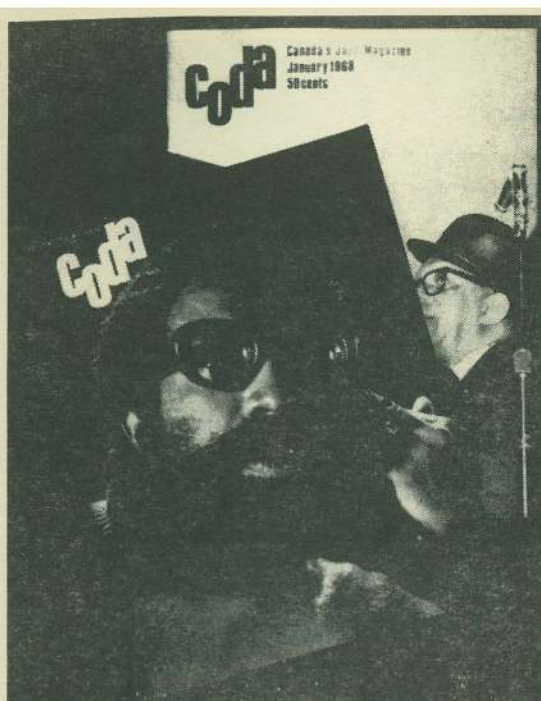
At the second session we attempted to recreate the sound of a string band and, in fact, we christened the group we assembled "The Chicago String Band." In addition to Carl, who played mandolin, violin and guitar, we used Johnny Young, guitar and mandolin; John Lee Granderson, guitar; and John Wrencher, harmonica. All took turns with the vocal chores, and the instrumental combinations were many and varied. Carl's vocal contributions included "Deceivin' Blues," "Trouble on Your Hands," "Hoodoo Blues," and "Railroad Blues," and his driving mandolin and sensitive violin playing enlivened the vocal and instrumental performances by the others.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Carl Martin's first record probably appeared under this pseudonym—"TENNESSEE CHOCOLATE DROPS"—Titles listed in the Dixon-Godrich Blues & Gospel book are "Knox County Stomp/Vine Street Drag". Recorded in Knoxville, c. April, 1930, issued on Vocalion 1517 and 5472, and probably featuring Carl Martin, Roland Martin, and Howard Armstrong. Our thanks to Dave Freeman, who first identified the record.)

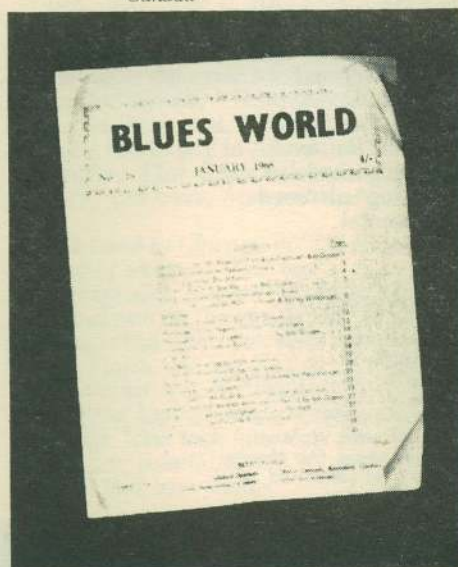
Chicago, April 12, 1935: Carl Martin's backup guitar is a strong contributing factor to the success of this country blues record...



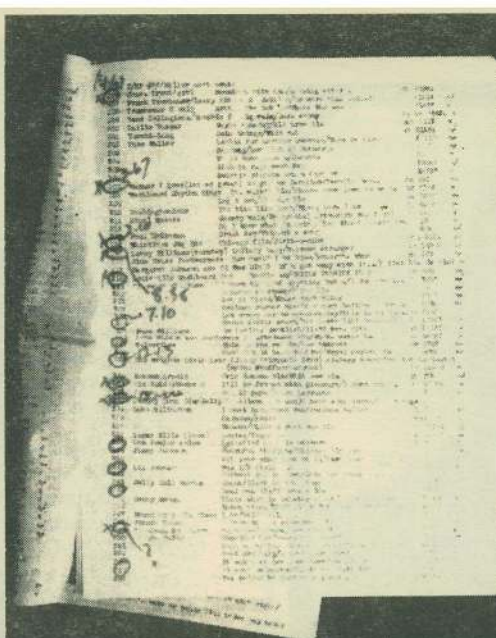
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photo courtesy of Reuben Reeves



REUBEN REEVES

By JACOB S. SCHNEIDER



A master trumpet virtuoso in an era of jazz virtuosity (the late '20s), he more than held his own against men like Jabbo Smith and Louis Armstrong. Today, Reuben Reeves looks back on a jazz career that spans 50 years:

"What were some of the differences between jazz of my time and the way it is played today? There is a vast difference in the rhythm and the style of instrumentation," said Reuben Reeves. "In those days, a musician played instrumentally mostly, and he played from the heart, and for the pure love of music. Hour after hour was devoted to jam sessions by musicians who would play for nothing or for charities. While the musicians of today are indeed charitable, it is more or less of a commercial proposition.

"Sooner or later we all met either at jam sessions, theatres, hot spots, restaurants, or ballrooms. I knew King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Johnny Dodds, Freddie Keppard and all the other greats of the 20's. It was all one big family. Of course, I also knew Fess Williams. I made recordings with Jelly Roll Morton. I knew Jabbo Smith, Alex Jackson, Leroy Williams, Hot Lips Page. I could go on naming them for hours."

Reuben Reeves was born October 25, 1905, and this makes him 62 years old. But, if you were to guess his age, you'd say he was nearer to 45. He is a bank guard with the Chemical Bank New York Trust Company in New York City, and the mere sight of him scares away all would be burglars and hold-up men.

He had two other brothers: Gerald Reeves who also was a fine musician and played trombone with Louis Armstrong at the old Sunset Cafe in Chicago and with Erskine Tate in the old Vendome in Chicago. This brother is deceased. His other brother, Robert, was not a musician and is now retired. Robert is the oldest member of the Reeves family. He is still living at the old homestead in Evansville, Indiana, where Reuben was born.

Reuben is the youngest of the three. He went to school in Evansville at Frederick Douglas High School. He started his musical career here, playing the trumpet, and by his senior year, became the assistant bandmaster. Before this, his only connection with the music world began when his mother insisted that he play the piano.

Mrs. Reeves, an accomplished pianist, gave piano lessons to her son, but somehow or other Reuben did not become attached to the piano. As he explained it to me, when he got to high school he wanted to play the trumpet because it was loud and it appealed to him.

Paul Baldwin, the school bandmaster, gave instruction to pupils who were interested in music. One day, Baldwin placed a battered trumpet in Reuben's hands, and Reuben, knowing nothing at all about trumpet, just started to play. Initially, some very 'weird' sounds emerged. These gradually turned into a semblance of his later style—a hot, elegant style that was to characterize his playing in Chicago through the 1920's and 30's.

Reuben played in the high school band at concerts, parades and other civic entertainments. (all gratis) But surprisingly, Reuben's ambition was to become a dentist. However, after he graduated from high school and during one of his jazz sessions with the high school band, another band from Lexington, Kentucky (Bill Smith & His Orchestra) heard him.

Smith became interested in Reuben, recognized 'something' in his playing, and asked him if he would like to tour with the Smith band during the summer.

Reuben earned \$8.00 a night as a trumpet player for Smith's band, and that \$8.00 was a considerable sum, because it was 1923—the era of The Free Lunch and The Good 5-cent Cigar.

In February 1924, Reuben came east to New York City to enter dentistry school, but he never did. He started taking on engagements in different night spots. One of them was Small's Paradise.

If any of you readers remember Small's Paradise in 1924 (originally called the Sugar Cane), it was located at 135th Street and Fifth Avenue. Later on, Small's Paradise moved to its present location at 135th Street and Seventh Avenue, and is now called Small's

Paradise Restaurant. It was the hottest night spot in New York; today, it is a fine restaurant where musicians still congregate.

Here, Reuben acted as a substitute, replacing musicians in various bands from time to time. After more than 40 years, he doesn't remember the names of the bands. He does recall that Count Basie was the piano player on several occasions. Reuben continued playing at Small's and other locations for about six months. In January, 1925, he went to Chicago. By that time, he had acquired a reputation.

His first job in Chicago was at a little cafe on State Street called the Oriental Cafe. And this is where Erskine Tate first heard him play. Tate went up to Reuben and asked him if he would be interested in joining the Tate band.

At Jacob S. Schneider's law offices on Amsterdam Avenue, New York...





Dave Peyton's Symphonic Syncopators (1924-25) featured King Oliver (front) before Reuben joined the band...

Said Reuben, "Erskine Tate had the best band I ever played with. He was a master, and the people used to stand for hours applauding. After each rendition there was a five to ten minute wait for the applause to stop. People came through storms, snow and hail to hear Tate's Orchestra."

Erskine Tate's Orchestra was to give Reuben his first big start as a full-time professional. One example of this professionalism was musical accompaniment to silent movies. It was here that Reuben learned a special skill of the era—the ability to play and synchronize classical music to silent film.

Reuben Reeves played trumpet in the Tate band for three years. Louis Armstrong had not yet joined Tate (it was after Reuben left that Louis became a member).

Reuben then went to the Regal Theatre with Dave Peyton, who was a piano player and musical conductor. The Regal Theatre was located at 47th Street and South Parkway in Chicago. When Reuben was playing there, Louis Armstrong and his band were featured at the Savoy Ballroom next door. Louis came into the Regal for one week and he joined Reuben for a jazz session (see photo).

Said Reuben, "I knew King Oliver personally and he was at the top. Yet, no one could even come close to Louis on the trumpet. At the time he joined me at the Regal for the jam sessions, the audience wouldn't

let us stop. The jam sessions with Louis and myself must have lasted an hour and a half at a time."

It was at the Regal that Reuben formed his own group: Reuben Reeves and His River Boys. The personnel of that famous band included his brother Gerald on trombone, Darnell Howard, clarinet, Omer Simeon, clarinet and alto, and Jasper Taylor on drums.

"There was a fellow by the name of Mayo Williams working with Vocalion at that time, who was looking for talent, and he heard my band playing at the Regal. He asked me whether I would be interested in making recordings. We were never told actually what records came out—we were just asked to attend and make the recordings. From the list of records that did come out, I must state that we made many, many more which the Company evidently didn't issue. Most of the recordings were made in the Furniture Mart in Chicago where the Brunswick and Vocalion studios were located."

Reuben had his band for approximately three years, then joined Cab Calloway's Band at the old Cotton Club in Harlem in 1931.

By 1933 he had reorganized his River Boys band in Chicago, and some of the band's performances appeared on the Vocalion 2000 series. The reorganized River Boys held together for about three years, after which, in 1936, Reuben led a band



The Erskine Tate Orchestra after Reuben left to join Dave Peyton's band. Reuben's replacement, Louis Armstrong, is at left in a trumpet duel with James Tate (far left).



Chicago, May 22, 1929: Reuben's first great recording session also features Damell Howard, Omer Simeon and Jasper Taylor...

with Connie's Hot Chocolate Show, the road edition for the season of 1936.

Then, he joined a group headed by Dick Ward, a drummer, and they played mostly in New York hot spots, big time restaurants and resorts. Cab Calloway's original pianist, Earles Prince, was in Ward's band. Another familiar name was Thornton Avery, the sax player.

Afterwards, Reuben began working for the most famous employer of all (Uncle Sam). He was in the Army during the entire war and saw considerable service overseas. Near the end of World War II, he was in charge of the 299th Army Ground Forces Band of the Seventh Division, and they played for all the boys overseas. He continued to lead that aggregation until after D-Day.

Some famous names were members of that band. They include trumpeters Jack Wilson and Otis Johnson, as well as Rudolph Williams, the son of Fess Williams.

After the War and his honorable discharge from the Army, Reuben didn't find work quickly as a musician. He worked in the post office for a few months. However, he soon joined Harry Dial and His Bluesicians. Hilton Jefferson, an old Calloway man, was playing saxophone and Hayes

Alvis, an old Ellington man, was the bassist, and Harry Dial, the drummer, was the leader. They played first in The Rendezvous on MacDougal in the Village and then at Small's Paradise in Harlem. That was between 1949 and 1955.

In the meantime, Reuben had become a member of the Chemical Bank of New York Trust Company in 1952 and is still employed there. He has many fond recollections; he still loves music, but he says that the life of a musician is too much for him at his "tender age" of 61. He says that jazz is exciting and exhilarating, but the *kind of jazz* he likes to play and the *kind of places* he likes to play at are only for a younger man.

When asked what he thought of 1960's rock and roll, Reuben said, "I know that some rock and rollers laugh all the way to the bank and make more money in one year than the old-time musician made during his lifetime."



photo courtesy of Reuben Reeves

A master trumpet virtuoso in an era of jazz virtuosity

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- (6) ROB COOPER: West Dallas
Drag/Black Gal (Joe Pullen)
—BB 5459 E+
- (7) IDA COX: Forism/Tree
Top Tall Papa—Para 12690 E+
- (8) ROSETTA CRAWFORD:
Tired Of Fattenin' Frogs/
Double Crossin' Papa—De 7584 N
- (9) JOHNNY DODDS: Come On
And Stomp/After You've Gone—
Br 3568 N
- (10) COOT GRANT & KID
WILSON: Come On Coot/Have
Your Chill—Para 12317 E+
- (11) EARL HINES: Chicago
Rhythm/Everybody Loves My
Baby—Vi 38042 N
- (12) JIM JACKSON: Gonna
Start Me A Graveyard/I'm A
Bad Bad Man—Vo 1164 E+
- (13) JESSE JAMES: Southern
Casey Jones/Lonesome Day
Blues—De 7213 N
- (14) BLIND LEMON JEFFER-
SON: Pneumonia Blues/That
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12880 N
- (15) BLIND WILLIE JOHN-
SON: Treat A Stranger Right/
Go With Me—Co 14597 N
- (16) JOHNSON'S JAZZERS:
Skiddle De Scow/Can I Get
It Now—Co 14247 N
- (17) CURTIS JONES: Black
Gypsy Blues/Alley Bound
Blues—Vo 04249 E
- (18) LUKE JORDAN: Pick
Poor Robin Clean/Travel-
ing Coon—Vi 20957 E+
- (19) LITTLE CHOCOLATE
DANDIES: 6 or 7 Times/
That's How I Feel Today—
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LOFTON: Tore Your Play-
house Down/Brown Skin
Girls—Me 61166 E+/E-

- (21) WINGY MANONE:
Let's Spill The Beans/About
A Quarter To Nine—Vo 2934 N-
- (22) McKINNEY'S COTTON
PICKERS: Cherry/Some
Sweet Day—Vi 21730 N
- (23) McKINNEY'S COTTON
PICKERS: Save It, Pretty
Mama/I Found A New Baby
—Vi 38061 N
- (24) TOMMY McCLENNAN:
Brown Skin Girl/Baby,
Please Don't Tell On Me
—BB 8444 N-
- (25) TOMMY McCLENNAN:
New Highway No. 51/I'm
Goin', Don't You Know—
BB 8499 N-
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Evergreen Money Blues—
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- (27) MILLS BLUE RHY-
THM BAND: St. Louis
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- (28) MISSOURIANS: Market
Street Stomp/Missouri Moan—
Vi 38067 E
- (29) BENNY MORTON: The
Gold Digger's Song/Tailor
Made—Co 2924 E+
- (30) JELLY ROLL MORTON:
That'll Never Do/Fickle Fay
Creep—Vi 23019 N
- (31) SCOTTIE NESBITT:
Troubled And Blue/Deep Deep
In The Ground—BB7155 E+
- (32) JIMMIE NOONE: It's
Tight Like That/Let's Saw
A Wild Oat—Vo 1238 N-
- (33) KING OLIVER: What
You Want Me To Do/Too Late
—Vi 38090 N/E+
- (34) LUIS RUSSELL: Dolly
Mine/Sweet Muntaz—OK 8454 E
- (35) LUIS RUSSELL: Song
Of The Swanee/Saratoga
Shout—OK 8780 E+
- (36) CECIL SCOTT: Spring-
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Oliver): West End Blues/
Get Up Off Your Knees—
OK 8620 N
- (38) ART TATUM: Wee Baby
Blues/Battery Bounce—De 8526 E+
- (39) BESSIE TUCKER: Bessie's
Moan/Penitentiary—Vi 38526 E+
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bed Hair Bobbie—OK 40378 N
- (3) ARCADIAN SEREN-
ADERS: Angry/You Gotta
Know How—OK 40517 V+
- (4) ARCADIAN SEREN-
ADERS: Back Home Again/
Carry It Down—OK 40538 E-
- (5) ARKANSAS SHORTY:
Whippin' That Jelly/Double
Crossin' Buddy—BB 8571 V+
- (6) ARKANSAS TRAVEL-
ERS: Those Panama Mamas/
(Okeh Syncopaters)—
Lindstrom 462 N (rare label)
- (7) LOUIS ARMSTRONG
HOT FIVE: Gut Bucket Bls/
Yes, I'm In The Barrel—
OK 8261 N
- (8) LOUIS ARMSTRONG
HOT FIVE: You're Next/
Oriental Strut—OK 8299 N
- (9) ALABAMA JUG BAND:
Ida/My Gal Sal—De 7000 N
- (10) ALABAMA JUG BAND:
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My Sister Kate/Gulf Coast
Blues—De 7001 E
- (11) ALABAMA JUG BAND:
Crazy Blues/Sugar Blues—
De 7042 N
- (12) ALABAMA RASCALS:
Jockey Stomp/Stomp That
Thing—Mel 12689 N-
- (13) ALABAMA SAM: You
Gonna Need Me/Red Cross
Blues—Mel 12753 E-
- (14) ALABAMA WASHBOARD
STOMPERS: Pepper Steak/
You Can Depend On Me—
Vo 1679 E-
- (15) ORA ALEXANDER:
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Co 14626 N
- (16) ORA ALEXANDER:
I Crave Your Lovin' Every
Day/Ugly Man Blues—
Co 14664 N
- (17) CHESTER ALLEN
AND CAMPBELL: Booze
Drinking Daddy/Railroad
Blues—BB 6224 N
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Looking For (Gnt 7231)/
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Fit De Battle Of Jericho/
Train's A Comin' (Ch 16378)
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CLOSING DATE:
August 30, 1968

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- (29) TINY PARHAM: Voodoo (Vi 38054; mx. 48844—1, unissued take)—Victor test N-
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- (31) TINY PARHAM: Tiny's Stomp (Vi 38068; mx. 48848—2)—Victor test N-
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- Island Blues (Vi 38041; mx. 48851—2)—Victor test N-
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- (38) TINY PARHAM: Rock Bottom (Vi 22842; mx. 62932—2, unissued take)—Victor test N-
- (39) TINY PARHAM: Down Yonder (mx. 62933—1, UNISSUED TITLE and unlisted take!)—Victor test N-
- (40) TINY PARHAM: Blue Moon Blues (Vi 23027; mx. 62934—1)—Victor test N-
- (41) TINY PARHAM: Squeeze Me (mx. 62935—1, UNISSUED TITLE!)—Victor test N-
- (42) TINY PARHAM: Back To The Jungle (Vi, mx. 62936—1, UNISSUED TITLE and unlisted take!)—Victor test N-
- (43) TINY PARHAM: Now That I've Found You (Vi 22778, mx. 62951—1)—Victor test N-
- (44) TINY PARHAM: Now That I've Found You (Vi 22778, mx. 62951—2, unissued take)—Victor test N-
- (45) TINY PARHAM: My Dreams (Vi 23432; mx. 62952—1, unissued take)—Victor test N-
- (46) TINY PARHAM: My Dreams (Vi 23432; mx. 62952—2)—Victor test N-
- (47) TINY PARHAM: After All I've Done For You (Vi 23432; mx. 62953—2)—Victor test N-
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- (50) ISHMAN BRACEY: Leavin' Town Blues (Vi 38560; mx. 45458—1, unissued take)—Victor test N-
- (51) ISHMAN BRACEY: Four Day Blues (Vi 38560; mx. 45461—1, unissued take)—Victor test N-
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78 AUCTIONS

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- (7) BO CARTER: Bannana In Your Fruit Basket/Pussy Cat Blues—Vo 03091 E+
- (8) BLIND NORRIS: The Katy Blues/Sundown Blues—De 7290 E+
- (9) TEXAS ALEXANDER: Levee Camp Moan/Section Gang—OK 8494 E-/V+
- (10) LONNIE JOHNSON: Lowland Moan/Tired of Living Alone—OK 8677 E-/V
- (11) SONNY SCOTT: Try Me Man Blues/Black Pony Blues—Vo 02586 E+
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- (14) CHARLIE McFADDEN: People People/Groceries On My Shelf—De 7317 E
- (15) KOKOMO ARNOLD: Model T Woman Blues/Mule Laid Down & Died—De 7198 E+
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- (16) MEMPHIS JUG BAND: Vo 03182 N
- (17) JIM FOSTER (Collins): Ch 15301 E-
- (18) TAYLOR & ANDERSON: Ch 50016 N
- (19) BUSTER JOHNSON/McCLURE: Vrs 6057 N
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78 AUCTIONS



(Francis Smith—continued)

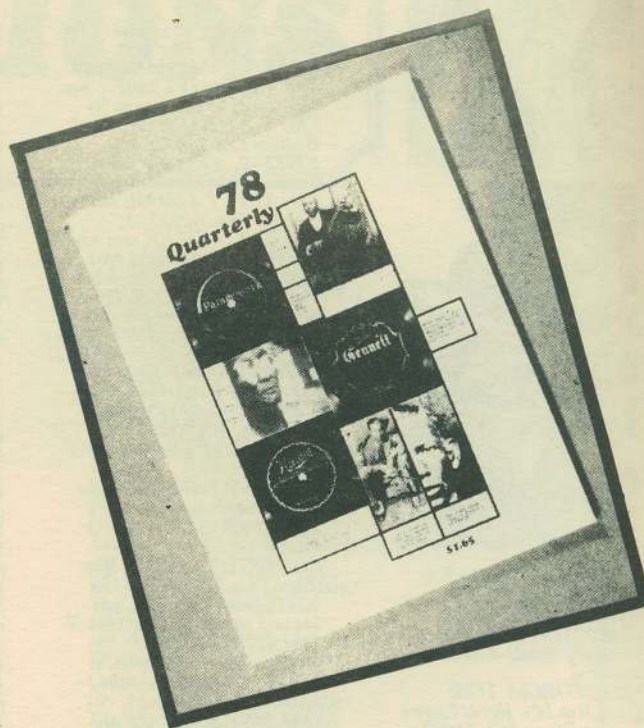
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Apologies to:

Don Kent—because the mechanical folding/binding requirements of the 8-page form system necessitated the withdrawal of his feature on Kansas Joe McCoy at the very last minute (now scheduled for the 3rd issue).
 Francis Smith—because earlier space commitments on the 2nd issue caused his feature on recorded blues to be postponed to the 3rd issue.
 Maxey Tarpley—owner of the Charley Patton photo reproduction along with the original Paramount supplement) for omitting the credit line on the two Patton photos in the first issue.
 Nick Perls—mechanical space limitations on the 2nd issue sabotaged Part 2 of the Son House Interview (to appear in the 3rd issue).
 Jacques Roche—whose acid rebuttal to criticisms of his "The Words" feature was deleted.

MAIL THEFT OF PACKAGES

Because of it, packages for 78 publishing co. which do not fit in the standard mail box should be mailed to Pete Whelan, c/o Technical Reproductions Corp., 407 Sette Drive, Paramus, N.J. 07652...

TALK about

**TALKABOUT—A Column
of Comment and Discussion
by Bob Groom:**

In the first edition of "78 Quarterly" there appeared an article entitled "The Words", written by (under the pseudonym of) "Jacques Roche". In common with other features in the same magazine, it discussed an interesting topic; in this case the gleanings of information on the background of singers from the lyrics to their records. In the course of it, however, "Roche" makes a number of controversial and provocative remarks deserving of a reply. Despite the scorn which he pours on the heads of other researchers (notably the British variety) "Roche's" own transcriptions and the conclusions he draws from them are anything but infallible.

It is not so much what "Roche" says as the dogmatism with which he says it. Where another writer might venture a theory with the proviso that his interpretation might be wrong, "Roche" allows no margin for error in his alleged statements of fact. A detailed examination of his transcriptions and the conclusions he derives from them shows that he is after all just as fallible as anyone else. He berates Paul Oliver for incorrectly transcribing King Solomon Hill's "That Gone Dead Train" and makes a ludicrous generalization about the "obsessive will to stereotype" displayed by British researchers. If this remark weren't so childish it would be amusing considering the circumstances. Why "Roche" should think that a researcher's nationality should have any bearing on his perceptiveness or lack of it is beyond my comprehension. If anything, it is "Roche" who displays a will-to-stereotype by conveniently mishearing a line in a Henry Thomas recording so as to fit it into his theory.

A closer examination of the text of "Roche's" article seems in order at this point as the pro's and con's of his various theories merit discussion.

His initial comments on Charlie Patton and Bo Weavil Jackson seem reasonable enough, although he could have mentioned that Patton would hardly have had to fake his "Elder Green" piece, as it was already in common use. "Roche" misquotes the line from "Hammer Blues" (which should really have titled "Hammock Blues") but the Rome reference is correct. I would disagree that Kid Bailey sings



"Sunflower" in his "Mississippi Bottom Blues", but in this case I can offer no alternative. "Roche's" suggestion that the George Bailey that Patton mentions in "Circle Round The Moon" was a reference to Kid Bailey is an interesting one and may well be correct. The adjective 'little' does not occur in the verse in question in the recording I have heard.

I am rather amused by Roche's reference to what he terms the "Frozen Lemon" theory. While the reported details of Jefferson's death have never been substantiated, it does not seem so unlikely to me that Blind Lemon suffered a heart attack and died from exposure alone in a frozen Chicago street. Roche misquotes Blind Lemon's "Maltese Cat Blues" and destroys the impact of the harrowing line which vividly describes the condition Jefferson must have often found himself in, particularly in the moneyless period immediately before a recording session. What Blind Lemon actually sings is "I got to stay drunk to keep warm because my clothes is so thin". This must have been real enough for Jefferson even if it might seem like fantasy to Roche.

Roche concludes from examining the lyrics of some of Henry Thomas's records that it is more probable that Thomas came from the Louisiana/South Arkansas area than from Texas as is generally thought. This premise seems to be based on the mention of several towns in this area in Thomas's songs (in "Shanty Blues", Delhi in NE Louisiana on the road from Monroe, Louisiana to Vicksburg, Mississippi and not far from the Mississippi River, and Eudora in SE Arkansas), but is this any more significant than lines like "I'm goin' back to Memphis, Tennessee" in "Bull Doze Blues"?

Obviously, Thomas had been in both areas but this proves nothing about his origins. Admittedly, these are rather generalized references but the more specific references to small towns do not necessarily indicate more than that Thomas passed through or at most lived in a particularly careful with an artist like Thomas whose recordings contain elements of very early song forms and the place names embodied in them. An example is "I'm gonna pack my suitcase, beat it back to Tennessee", a very old line which survived into the era of blues recording. "Shanty Blues" is a very old theme recorded variously by Thomas, The Mississippi Sheiks

(as "Bootlegger's Blues"), John Henry Howard (as "Gonna Keep My Skillet Good and Greasy"), Mississippi John Hurt (as "Pay Day"), old time white country singer Uncle Dave Macon (as "I've Got My Skillet Good and Greasy") and many others. In "Run Mollie Run", Thomas mentions Bossier City, now a suburb of Shreveport, Louisiana (correctly identified by Roche) and Huntsville, Texas (which for some reason Roche identifies as Haynesville, Louisiana and then fits it into his hypothesis). Huntsville is mentioned twice and references to a ball and chain, etc. confirm that Thomas is referring to the Huntsville jail. The tune is in fact "Huntsville Bound". Henry Thomas had the nickname of 'Ragtime Texas' and I think this is a fair indication of his origins.

Roche criticizes Paul Oliver for incorrectly transcribing King Solomon Hill's "The Gone Dead Train" in "Blues Fell This Morning". Now that King Solomon Hill has been identified as Joe Holmes and some details of his life are known, it is possible to explain some references in his songs. Oliver is criticized for not realizing that Hill was connected with Louisiana. This is hardly fair and, I suspect, simply reflects Roche's wish to share in the 'glory' of revealing the true story of King Solomon Hill. However, when one comes to examine the lyrics of "The Gone Dead Train" (which I had transcribed long before Roche's article appeared, along with the other three available Hill sides), it is quite evident that some of the supposed place references given by Roche are quite imaginary. Considering Roche's contemptuous remark about "the will-to-stereotype (which passes for a love of the blues in Britain)" his own distortions of blues lyrics are rather puzzling. My own version of the second stanza follows:

"Lord I once was a hobo,
I caught so many freights
But I decided I'd go down for a fatmouth
and take it as it comes
(I reckon that mean old fireman
and engineer would to)"
Strangely at odds with the references to Fryeburg and Illinois in Roche's transcription but essentially correct I feel.

Roche's remark that a 'none-too-subtle British collector' induced Joe Williams to say he was King Solomon Hill is nonsense. The suggestion sprung originally from a conversation between Williams and Bob Koester who later stated it as a certain fact in "Jazz Report". I have never believed this or the identification with Sam Collins, which Roche says was created 'to make things interesting', a pointless idea and an unprincipled one to my way of thinking. I can't imagine that many people were fooled; I never gave the suggestion serious consideration.

Roche's comment that Hill is able to form blues lines with subordinate clauses hardly takes into account that three of his four recovered recordings derive almost verbatim from earlier recordings.

Analyzing another writer's article in this fashion is not something I like doing but in this case I felt that Roche's dogmatic assertions needed challenging and the record setting straight.



The Perfect 100 Race Series —PART 2

Numerical Listing
by John Godrich

160 9705 ROY MARTIN AND
KID WILLIAMS—Birmingham Jail
9714 ROY MARTIN AND KID
WILLIAMS—May I Sleep In Your
Barn Tonight Mister? (8/31)

161 9611-2 FAMOUS HOKUM
BOYS—You Can't Get Enough
Of That Stuff
9612-1 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS
—Rollin' Mill

162 9607-1 GEORGIA TOM—
The Duck's Yas Yas Yas
9605-1 GEORGIA TOM—You
Got Me In This Mess

163 9579-3 GEORGIA TOM—
My Texas Blues
9627-1, -2 SAMMY SAMPSON
—Bow Leg Baby

164 9750 PATT PATTERSON
AND HIS CHAMPION REP
RIDERS—The Old Chisholm Trail
9738 PATT PATTERSON AND
HIS CHAMPION REP RIDERS—
The Cat's Whiskers

165 9894 GEORGE RILEY (The
Yodelling Rustler)—The Railroad
Bum
9887 GEORGE RILEY (The Yodel-
ling Rustler)—The Grave By The
Whispering Pine

166 10082 PECK'S MALE
QUARTETTE—Going Down To
The Valley
10085 PECK'S MALE QUAR-
TETTE—Oh, I Want To See Him

167 19861 ARTHUR CORNWALL
AND WILLIAM CLEARY—What A
Friend We Have In Jesus
19879 ARTHUR CORNWALL
AND WILLIAM CLEARY—Pass
It On

(NOTE: For issues 167 to 170
the first digit of the matrix number
is false and should be disregarded.)

168 19758 PATT PATTERSON
AND LOIS DEXTER—The Cowboy's
Love Song
19751 PATT PATTERSON AND
HIS CHAMPION REP RIDERS—
Tidy Up And Down The Old
Brass Wagon

169 110048-2 GEORGIA TOM
AND HANNAH MAY—Terrible
Operation Blues
(7/31) 110041-1 FAMOUS
HOKUM BOYS—Come On Mama

170 110046-2 GEORGIA TOM
AND HANNAH MAY—What's
That I Smell
110033-1, -2 SAMMY SAMPSON
AND HANNAH MAY—Court
House Blues

171 10047-2 GEORGIA TOM
AND HANNAH MAY—It's Been
So Long
10049-1, -2 GEORGIA TOM
AND HANNAH MAY—Rent
Man Blues

172 10037- WILLIAMS AND
SAMPSON—Barrel House Rag
10034- FAMOUS HOKUM
BOYS—Come On In

173 10031-2 HANNAH MAY
AND BONNIE THOMAS—
Pussy-Cat Blues
10032-2 HANNAH MAY AND
BONNIE THOMAS—What You
Call That?

174 10038-2 FAMOUS HOKUM
BOYS—You Do It
10039-2 FAMOUS HOKUM
BOYS—That Stuff I Got

175 10511 THE FAMOUS
GARLAND JUBILEE SINGERS
—Who Stole De Lock?
10508 THE FAMOUS GARLAND
JUBILEE SINGERS—South Bound
Passenger Train

(NOTE: These titles are by
Bryant's Jubilee Quartette.)

176 10510 THE FAMOUS GAR-
LAND JUBILEE SINGERS—
Were You There?
10509 THE FAMOUS GARLAND
JUBILEE SINGERS—Let Jesus
Lead You

177 10525 THE FAMOUS GAR-
LAND JUBILEE SINGERS—
Didn't It Rain
10522 THE FAMOUS GARLAND
JUBILEE SINGERS—Oh Lord
How Long?

178 10040-2 FAMOUS HOKUM
BOYS—Pat That Bread
10051-2 FAMOUS HOKUM BOYS
—It's All Used Up



179 10045-2 BILL WILLIAMS
AND SAMMY SAMPSON—No
Good Buddy
9621-1 SAMMY SAMPSON—
Tadpole Blues

180 10659-1 THE TWO POOR
BOYS—I'm Sitting On Top Of
The World
(6/31) 10652-1 JOE EVANS
—Take A Look At That Baby

181 10650-3 THE TWO
POOR BOYS—John Henry Blues
(6/31) 10651-2 JOE EVANS
—New Huntsville Jail

182 10649 THE TWO
POOR BOYS—Two White Horses
In A Line
10655 JOE EVANS—
Georgia Rose

183 10661-2 ARTHUR
McCLAIN—My Baby Got
A Yo-Yo
10653-2 JOE EVANS—
Mill Man Blues

184 10665-2 JOE EVANS
—Shook It This Morning Blues
10664-1 JOE EVANS—Down
In Black Bottom

185 10656 JOE EVANS—
Early Some Morning Blues
10657 ARTHUR McCLAIN—
Cream And Sugar Blues

186 10053-2 SAMMY SAM-
PSON—Meanest Kind Of Blues
10054 SAMMY SAMPSON—
I Got The Blues For My Baby

187 10055-1 GEORGIA TOM
—Don't Mean To Mistreat You
9600-1 SAMMY SAMPSON—
Grandma's Farm

188 10633 THE COTTON
PICKERS—Steal Away To
Jesus
10634 THE COTTON PIC-
KERS—Listen To The Lambs



189 10523-2 THE FAMOUS
GARLAND JUBILEE SINGERS
—Hold The Wind
10524-1 THE FAMOUS GAR-
LAND JUBILEE SINGERS
—Oh Rocks Don't You Fall
On Me

(NOTE: These titles are by
Bryant's Jubilee Quartette.)





**Big Bill Broonzy (right)
and friends (unidentified).**

**190 10517-3 THE FAMOUS
GARLAND JUBILEE SINGERS**
—This Train (—)
(8/31) 10519-1 THE FAMOUS
GARLAND JUBILEE SINGERS
—I Want To Be Ready (—)

**191 10662 EVANS AND
McCLAIN—So Sorry Dear**
10654 JOE EVANS—Oh You
Son Of A Gun

**192 10035-2 FAMOUS
HOKUM BOYS—Ain't Going
There No More**
(10/31) 10050-1 FAMOUS
HOKUM BOYS—Pie-Eating Strut

193 10839-2 SALTY DOG SAM
—Slow Mama Slow
10837-1 SALTY DOG SAM—
New Salty Dog

(NOTE: This is Sam Collins.)

**194 10855-1 REV. JORDAN
JONES AND CONGREGATION**
—Black Cat Has Crossed
Your Path
10857-3 REV. JORDAN JONES
AND CONGREGATION—Hell
And What It Is

(NOTE: This is Rev. Emmitt
Dickinson.)

**195 E7477W LULU WIL-
LIAMS—Careless Love Blues**
(3/32) E7476W LULU WIL-
LIAMS—You're Going To Leave
The Old Home Jim!

(NOTE: This is Lulu Jackson,
and taken from Voc 1193. The
E numbers are controls.)

**196 C3936-A RAMPART
STREET WASHBOARD BAND**
—Forty And Tight (Melrose)
C3937-A RAMPART STREET
WASHBOARD BAND—Piggly
Wiggly (Cobb)

(NOTE: This is The Beale
Street Washboard Band, and
taken from Voc 1403.)

197 C6947-A BESSIE JACKSON
—Black Angel Blues (Smith)
C6848-A BESSIE JACKSON—
Tricks Ain't Walking
No More (Bogan)

(NOTE: This is Lucille Bogan,
and taken from Br 7186.)

**198 C5562-A BESSIE JACK-
SON—Sloppy Drunk Blues (James)**
C5563-A BESSIE JACKSON—
Alley Boogie (Bogan)

(NOTE: This is Lucille Bogan,
and taken from Br 7210.)

199 10042-1 SAMMY SAMPSON
—Police Station Blues
10043-1 SAMMY SAMPSON—
They Can't Do That

**0200 9584-2 FRANK BRAS-
SWELL—Mountain Girl Blues**
9583-1 FRANK BRASSWELL
—The Western Blues

**0201 10052-1 SAMMY SAMP-
SON—State Street Woman**
10044-1 BILL WILLIAMS—
Mr Conductor Man

**0202 9740-2 SALTY DOG
FOUR—West Coast Stomp**
9741-3 SALTY DOG FOUR
—Ballin' The Jack

(NOTE: These are listed as
the Red Devils in the Per-
fect files.)

**0203 10841-2 SALTY DOG
SAM—Signifying Blues**
10842-2 SALTY DOG SAM
—I'm Still Sitting On Top Of
The World

(NOTE: This is Sam Collins.)

**0204 10512-1 THE FAMOUS
GARLAND JUBILEE SINGERS**
—Every Time I Feel The Spirit
(4/32) 10514-2 THE FAMOUS
GARLAND JUBILEE SINGERS
—Shine On Me

(NOTE: These titles are by
Bryant's Jubilee Quartette.)

**0205 11612-1 ALABAMA RAS-
CALS—Georgia Grind**

(5/32) 11619-1 ALABAMA
RASCALS—Rukus Juice Shuffle

(NOTE: These are the Memphis
Nighthawks.)

**0206 11629-1 ALABAMA RAS-
CALS—Endurance Stomp**
11625-3 BLACK DIAMOND
TWINS—Block And Tackle

(NOTE: The B side is by Buddy
Burton and Ed Hudson.)

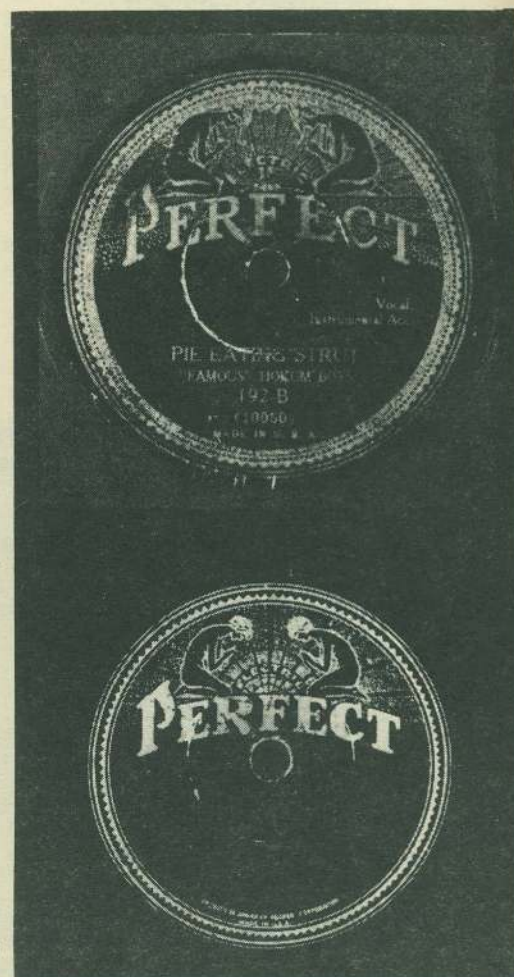
**0207 11611-2 BIG BILL—How
You Want It Done?**
11624-2 BIG BILL AND HIS JUG
BUSTERS—M&O Blues

**0208 11689 JOSHUA WHITE
AND HIS GUITAR—Bad Depression
Blues**
11659 JOSHUA WHITE AND HIS
GUITAR—Howling Wolf Blues

**0209 11688-1 JOSHUA WHITE AND
HIS GUITAR—Things About Coming
My Way**
11695-1 JOSHUA WHITE AND HIS
GUITAR—So Sweet, So Sweet

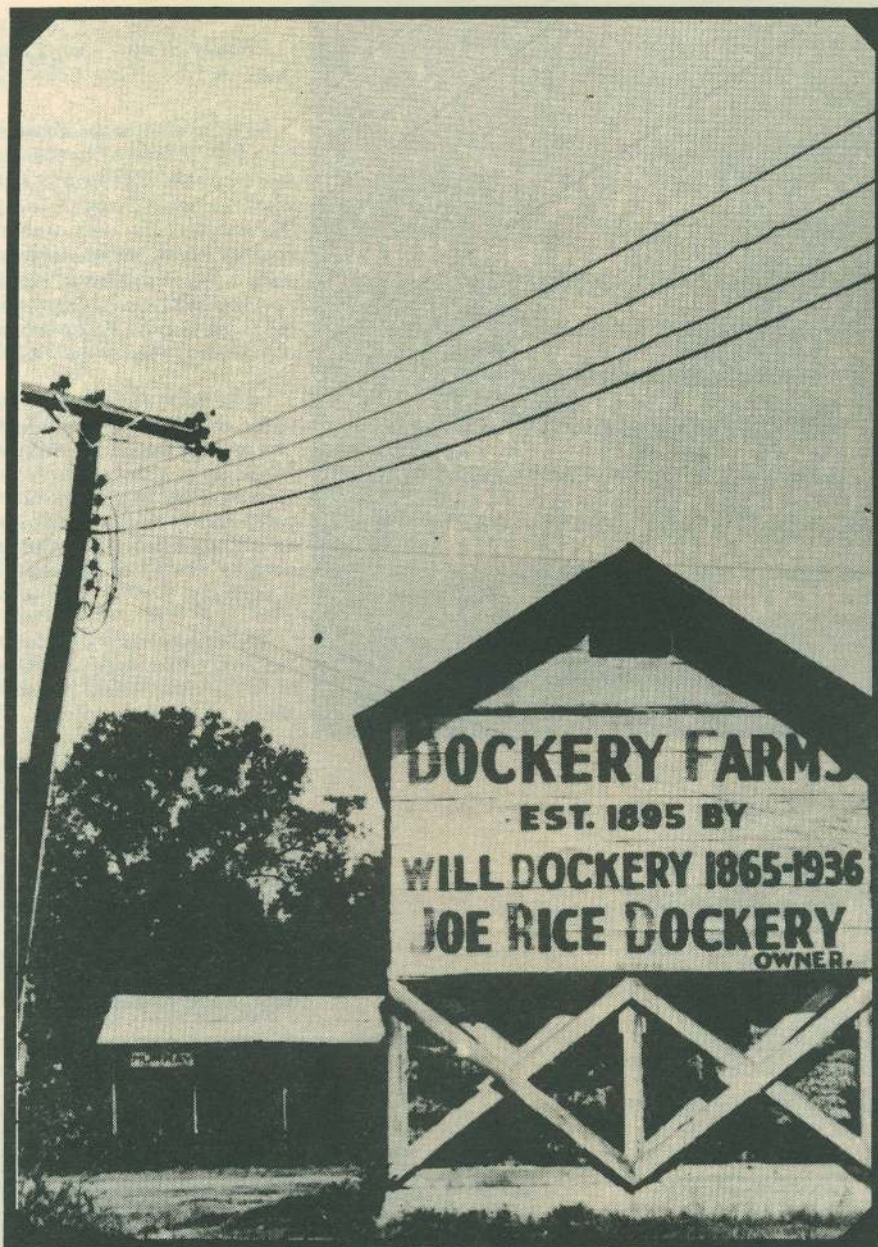
0210 C2611-A HALF PINT JAXON
—Fan It
C2503-A HALF PINT JAXON—
How Can I Get It?

(NOTE: This is Frankie Jaxon,
and taken from Voc 1257.)



from the collection of Ben Kaplan

photo by Dave Evans



*Dockery Farms,
Mississippi:
scene of Willie
Brown's and
Charley
Patton's early
blues
performances...*

WILLIE BROWN

Fare Thee Well:

By BERNARD KLATZKO

McClosky's investigations into the missing Willie Brown Paramount led to a curious trail of intrigue, dissolution and death...

Somewhere, not far off, timber wolves had begun howling in unison. The trail was cold. It had begun in 1930 at the Paramount furniture factory (subcontractors to the Wisconsin Chair) in wintry Port Washington, Wis. Thirty eight years later, the trail made a sharp right turn east to New York.

By April, 1967, Barney McClosky, the most voracious record collector of his time, made a hurried exit from his overworked '57 Chevy and descended on the 'innocent' streets of Queens, New York.

He was wearing a sheepskin-lined, genuine cowhide jacket and a black beret, an attire which would have made him appear quite at home with the Basques and rugged mountain cliffs of the Pyrenees, but rather absurd amongst the high rise apartment buildings of Queens.

He trembled slightly with anticipation as he approached one of the buildings. This mission was important. Philip Manheim had died and Barney was here to scavenge the remains of an alleged prize collection of rare jazz and blues records.

Actually, the contents of this collection were virtually unknown because Manheim was unapproachable by other collectors who were out to make unfair trades. What attracted Barney, a fierce country blues competitor, was the magic name *Willie Brown*.

"Willie Brown," said James McKune back in 1957, "isn't much."

McKune had heard Manheim's copy of a Willie Brown Paramount and gave this opinion of Brown to Pete Whelan who had never heard Willie perform at all. McKune was the only authority on country blues at that time and so Whelan and, a few years later, McClosky, used to pump McKune with questions about blues singers in order to avoid the pitfall of spending money on "bad" records.

In fairness to James (who rightly regarded Patton as the greatest, hearing Brown only once) his first impression of Willie as a weaker singer in the Patton vein was really a quick and accurate judgment. The fact that Brown stands as a giant against most other blues singers wasn't as apparent in 1957 as it is today.

The importance of all this is that McClosky had some vague prospects of finding the Willie Brown Paramount among Manheim's effects. What added spice to the situation was that McKune didn't remember which Paramount Manheim had. Paramount released only two Willie Brown records. A half dozen copies of *Future Blues/M & O Blues* (on the Champion 50023 reissue) are in the hands of collectors; so we know Brown's music of the early '30's. Two cracked and unplayable Paramounts (both *Future/M & O*) were dug out of Mississippi shacks, first by Wardlow in 1963 and then, Dave Evans in 1967. But Paramount



McClosky's unusual but old-fashioned attire was scarcely calculated to win friends in Queens.

13099 Kicking In My Sleep Blues/
Window Blues is still an illusive and
desireable item.

Manheim was afraid of germs and wore
gloves, McKune had said. He wouldn't
shake hands with you unless he had
gloves on.

Barney suspected that the chances
of the Willie Brown Paramount still
being there were miniscule. Didn't
Manheim's relative tell Barney that
Manheim died about a year ago?

"What record collection?" She said.
"I haven't seen Philip in 15 years.
He died alone—Penniless."

This information was gleaned after
Barney had made over 15 telephone
calls (most of them embarrassing) to
various Manheims listed in the New
York telephone books. This desparate
search began when a letter from McClosky
to Manheim was returned by the Post
Office stamped DECEASED. McClosky
had never written to Manheim before.

Being unable to establish any
workable relation with Manheim's only
contactable relative, Barney went di-
rectly to Manheim's apartment house,
The Wentworth Arms, to talk to the
superintendent. In the lobby, Barney
discovered the porter mopping the floor.

"Maybe you can help me," he said.
Barney showed the porter the returned
Manheim envelope to establish his
legitimacy as an interrogator. "I buy
old records and I know Mr. Manheim had
a nice collection. Could you tell me
what happened to his records?"

The porter put down his mop and
searched for the right words. "Well,

urra, urra, you'll have to talk to the
Super," he said.

"I tried the Super. He isn't home.
Don't worry, I won't make trouble—
see? No trouble. I'm only interested
in buying the records. Are there any
records left?"

"Well," said the porter, "most
of the records was disposed of by the
Super."

"Did he sell them or throw them
out?" Barney asked.

"Well, you'll have to talk to the
Super," the porter said. "Call the Super.
He comes in at five. The phone. The
building is in the phone book."

Barney left, found the telephone
number of The Wentworth Arms in the
Queens book, and called at 5:30.

The Super's wife answered the phone.
She spoke with a pungent Irish brogue.

"I was at your house earlier today.
Did the porter tell you?"

"Yes."

"Are there any records left?"

"There are a few in the basement.
It doesn't pay to come out here for them.
So few, hardly any."

"Well, let me come out anyway. I'll
take my chances, okay?"

She reluctantly agreed to let Barney
come back the next day, Sunday.

On Sunday it had turned bitter cold.
It was to become the last cold day in
April. This, Barney thought, is it. Only
a few records left. The chances are
remote. I'm doing it for the Willie Brown.

The Super's name was Kearney.
McClosky rang the bell. Kearney came
to the door. He was in his 60's, about
five feet, ten inches, with bright blue
eyes and a ruddy complexion. They
shook hands. He had big hands, Barney
thought, like Jack Dempsey.

"I'm Kearney," he said.

After a few minutes Mr. Kearney
began, "Manheim was a fine gentleman.
He had class. A Yale graduate, you
know. He died two years ago. I don't
know what happened to him at the end.
He came from a fine family and had
plenty of money. But at the end, you
know, he was carting works of art out
of the building and selling them."

Could have sold his records, too,
Barney thought.

from the collection of Dave Evans



July, 1930: one of the two Paramounts
recorded by Willie Brown. The other
Paramount, "Window Blues/Kicking
In My Sleep Blues", still hasn't been
found by collectors...

**a curious
trail of intrigue,
dissolution and
death...**

"He was acting strange," Kearney said. "He kept to himself, you know. He didn't like to bother with people because they always wanted something from him. He didn't go for that. Funny though, he was always taking young men up to his apartment, you know. Especially some young fellows just out of prison."

McClosky and Kearney took the elevator down to the basement. They walked over to a huge cardboard box, the type used for shipping canned goods and measuring three by four by three feet high. Books made up the bulk of its contents. But strewn over the top and to one side were 78 r.p.m. records.

Barney began probing. He examined the first disk, "Relaxin' At The Toro", Muggsy Spanier on Bluebird, new but cracked. Good white jazz of the '30's, but not rare. Next, "Rock Of Ages", F.W. McGee on Victor E and still in one piece. Top preacher of the late '20's who made some of the best religious records. This was not among them.

Next, "Jonah In The Belly Of The Whale", new and whole. The last one-third of the record contains some of the most exhilarating religious music ever waxed. Sold a hundred thousand copies in its day.

Next, "Vicksburg Blues—No. 2", Little Brother Montgomery on Bluebird N. The second best Little Brother record. Exceeded only by "Vicksburg—No. 3"—and one of the finest country blues with piano accomp. (a rare combination).

Next, "Stackerlee", Furry Lewis, Brunswick E, the country blues classic, the reissue pressed from the original Vocalion master. Barney fished for more. There were several Clarence Williams Okeh's in G condition. Nothing more.

NO WILLIE BROWN.

God, Barney thought, the skeletal remains. "What happened to all the other records, Mr. Kearney?"

"Some were thrown out, you know. But he must have had some in his other apartment in Manhattan."

"Another apartment?" asked Barney, surprised. "What's the address?"

"Have no idea. Fact is, you know, he died there not here," Kearney said.

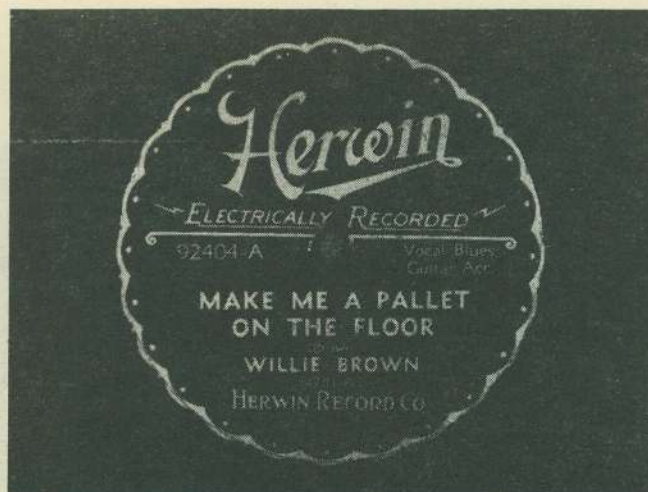
"What caused his death? How old was he?"

"He was about 52. Don't know what he died of. What do you die of at 52?"

Barney handed the Super \$1.50 'for his trouble' and the records. Did it pay to track down Manheim's Manhattan address? Dead over two years and all property in Manhattan probably confiscated by the City. Barney's greed had measurable limits. Not quite insane, in fact, perhaps completely sane, he knew the time. It was time to bid Willie Brown FARE THEE WELL.

EPILOGUE: Paramount 13099 still hasn't been recovered by a known collector at this writing. But, as luck would have it, a completely unknown Willie Brown performance was discovered in the archives of the Library Of Congress. It was well concealed, since it was listed in the catalogue as a Son House recording of "Make Me A Pallet On The Floor". Recorded at Lake Cormorant, Miss., 1941.

Future Blues/M&O Blues—reissue available on Origin, OJL-5, Mississippi Blues; Make Me A Pallet On The Floor—issued and available on Herwin 92404.



Beyond his four titles on Paramount (two haven't been heard), this is Willie Brown's only other recording. Recorded at Lake Cormorant, Miss., 1941, and issued on the revitalized Herwin label.

Notes on Brian Rust's Jazz Records 1897-1931

**Bert Whyatt
presents the first
in a series of
revisions and
additions to the
Rust jazz book—
Part 1: A to B...**

When the second edition (i.e., the non-Blues version) of this fine work was published early in 1963, I got down to work on checking all my files against it. The notes resulting from this were sent to Brian Rust for his inspection and comments. These comments were then inserted into three carbon copies of the notes and these were circulated to various collectors in the USA, the UK and the European continent. The last copy seems to have disappeared forever, but the other two's jourmies produced further material. All of this has now been collated into the mass of notes which follow.

This material arises from the gathering together of data on records which have either been seen and/or heard by me or have been reliably reported to me by scores of collectors who are discographically inclined. So many people have (and still are) been involved that it would be well nigh impossible to name them all. Rather than implicate anyone, should there be any erroneous data herein, I will list no names but here offer my thanks to all who have contributed in the hope that they will recognize their own particular items as they appear.

Additional material has been gained from various record magazine articles whose writers are, in my opinion, reliable. Thus, it may well be that some of these notes are not "news" to everyone. However, if they do nothing more than serve the purpose of getting everything into one place, then some good will come from all the effort!

The material is condensed as much as possible. I have tried to make it

as clear as possible in the circumstances, with page numbers and artist headings in bold type and pseudonyms in capital letters. Tune titles are in quotes; but, as much as possible, I have referred to titles by matrix number for ease of location.

Further data is solicited, but please note: (1) indicate your source (the actual record, company files, etc.); restrict such information to artists contained within the alphabetical limits of these notes so far published (I would rather you add to my notes on, say, Fred Rich than have us both duplicate each other's data.) Depending on circumstances, further material will be published in 78 Quarterly in due course.

Write to me at: 10, Fore Street, Taunton, Somerset, England.

40 AUSTIN—Correct tune title on Paramount 12359 is "Don't Forget To Mess-Around When You Do The Charleston", and take 1 also issued. **GENE AUSTIN**—Monk Hazel doubles on cornet on LA-208-A. **LOVIE AUSTIN**—10005-2 is "Traveling Blues"; 2095-2 not on Century 3012; 2098-2 Silvertone cat. number is 2552; amend note, only Silvertone 3572 as **THE HOT DOGS**—others as **BOBBY'S REVELERS**; 2219-1 also Silvertone 3552; matrix of "Too Sweet For Words" is 2222-1; August, 1926: Pannassie says cnt is not Ladnier and that tbn is probably Kid Ory; 2622-1 also on XX 7 as **HIGH FIDELITY'S NYMPHS & SATYRS**; vocalist credit on 2621-1/2624-2 should be -2 (not -1). **42 add BACK BEACH PIRATES**—pseudonym on XX label for State Street Ramblers, q.v. **BAILEY'S LUCKY SEVEN**—issues

of alternate takes shown where known by mx no. without take, then issue no. without label and with take in ()—7668, 4795 (-B) Apex (cat no. unknown) (plain take); 7669, 3697 (plain); 7712, 7022 (-C); 7752, 4831 (plain); 7809 on VF 1053 (not 1049); **43** 7936, 4910 (-B), 471 (-A), 9267 (-A), 3811 (-B); 7937, 4909 (-C), 471 (plain), 3796 (-C); 7969-A, B Gennett label says features Lillian Robbins so presumably she plays the slide-whistle or musical-saw; 7993, 4935 (-A), 531 (-B), 3797 (-A); 7994 take A also issued, 4933 (-B), 9280 (-A); 8032-A, B also Lillian Robbins featured, 4975 (-B), 3868 (-A and -B); 8033 plain take also issued, 4795 (plain), 2117 (-A); 8058, 459 (-A), 3798 (-A); 8059, 3100 (plain); 8060 plain, A features a xylophone, 9309 (-A), 3797 (plain), strike out Westport 3100 (a Joe Samuels side); **44** 8101-A strike out Westport 3072 and add to 8100-A; 8109 take A also issued and add Apex 451; 8110 all same; 8141 unknown take also Westport 2070 as **PAVILION PLAYERS**; 8252 the Gennett Special is labelled Fraternity; 8343 add take A on Starr 9392; 8344 add plain take on Starr 9392; 8365-A add -3 as vocal credit; 8404 also Apex 421; 8405 also Apex 388; **45** 8464-A amend vocal credit to -3; 8465, 5232 (-A), 418 (plain), 3976 (plain) also on Guardsman 1389 (take unknown) as **NEW JERSEY DANCE ORCH**; 8466 plain also issued, 5232 (-B), 413 (-A), 9438 (plain); 8484, 5243 (plain), 9437 (-B); 8594 plain take also issued, 3977 (plain); 8648/8649-A amend Gennett 5324 to 5334; 8686 plain take also issued, add EBW 4012 (plain) as **DIPLOMAT NOVELTY ORCH**; January (16?), 1924, strike out "Hula Lou"; add this session—8720-A "Mindin' My Business" Gennett 5364, Starr 9512—8721 plain "Hula Lou" Gennett ????; Starr 9512—(mx unknown) "If You'll Come Back" Gennett 5364; add (mx unknown) "Lazy" Gennett 5407; 8824 take A also issued, amend Starr 9439 to 9539 (-A); 8825 plain take also issued, amend Starr 9439 to 9539 (plain); re-write next session amending date to May, 1924 (not c. April)—8872 plain "Oh Baby" Gennett 5452, Remington 50003 as **REMINGTON DANCE ORCH**—8873-A "Oriental Love Dreams" Gennett ????; Starr 9551 (not 9550), Operaphone 9551—8874 plain "Never Again" Gennett ????; Starr 9551 (not 9550), Operaphone 9551; add this session—early June, 1924—8906 plain "Wait'll You See My Gal" Gennett 5471, Starr 9560—8907-A "If I Can't Get The One I Want" Gennett 5471, Starr 9560—8908 plain "Maytime" Gennett 5463, Starr 9564; from unknown session—(unknown mx) "Mandalay" Gennett 5463; add—perhaps from same session as 9052—"Go Emmaline"/"Lucille" Gennett 5532; 9547 plain take also issued, 3075 (plain and -A); **47**—9608 plain and -B also issued, 3094 (plain, -A and -B); 9538 plain



from the collection of Bernard Klatzko



also issued, 3086 (plain and -A); 9640 also Champion 15009 as SEVEN CHAMPIONS; 9699-A also English Vocalion X-9901 as RIVERSIDE DANCE BAND; 9701-A is labelled TRAVIS -CARLTON ORCH on Gennett and therefore may not be a Bailey's Lucky Seven side (also on Champion 15006 as TED MARSHALL'S ORCH); 9723 full title is "Desdemona (That Personal Friend Of Mine)"; 9745 also Champion 15031 as SEVEN CHAMPIONS; 9745 amend Vocalion X-9796 to X-9797; 9776 Champion 15040 is as SEVEN CHAMPIONS; 9846-A also Champion 15055 as SEVEN CHAMPIONS; December (24?), 1925, amend note - Aco G15955 only as RIO GRANDE DANCE ORCH - G16008 as OHIO NOVELTY BAND, Guardsman 1892 only as NEW JERSEY DANCE ORCH - 1896 as SAN FRANCISCO DANCE BAND; February (1?), 1926, amend note - Coliseum 1912 only as MARYLAND DANCE ORCH - 1894 as MAYFIELD DANCE ORCH, both Guardsman as SAN FRANCISCO DANCE BAND, Aco G16008 as OHIO NOVELTY BAND. **BUSTER BAILEY** 671112bw - also Oriole 442 as BILLY WARD, Clarinet Solo, Novelty Acc. **49 MAYNARD BAIRD** - Harold Taft plays baritone sax. **50 SMITH BALLEW** - 103773-B has a vocal by a female; 403774-A also Parlophone R620, Ariel Z4541 as ARIEL DANCE ORCH, 403820-A also Ariel 4636 as ARIEL DANCE ORCH, 51 150874-3 also Regal G20902 as DENZA DANCE BAND, 404512-C also Parlophone A3093, 404513-C also Parlophone A3100. **52 add BARBARY COAST ORCHESTRA** - probably Howard Berg (tbn), Cliff Randall (clt/alto), Bob Slater (clt/ten), M.R. "Russ" Goudey (clt/alt/bar/dir), Phil Thompson (pno), Chuck Peacock (bjo), unknown (bbs), Lewis Beers (dms), N.Y., c. late, 1924, 170031-1 "Wabash Blues" Columbia 72-P, 170032-2 "San" Columbia 72-P; BARBARY COAST ORCHESTRA OF DARTMOUTH - personnel unknown, N.Y.C. perhaps 1928, 170258-2

"Canzone Amarosa (Venetian Love Song)" Columbia 94-P, 170259-1 "Weary Blues" Columbia 94-P. **BAR HARBOR SOCIETY ORCH** - add 9115 "When My Sugar Walks Down The Street" (Westchester Dance Orch, q.v. later in these notes). **53 WALTER BARNES** - C-2660 full title is "My Kinda Love (One Way To Paradise)" December (24?), 1928, add C-2704 "Beau-Koo-Jack" rejected, C-3941 there is a non-vocal version of this on German Brunswick (unknown cat no). **BARREL-HOUSE FIVE** - Ed Allen is vocalist (not Williams), 327 title on QRS is "Nobody's Business (How I Love That Man)"; 330 also VJR 21, on the Paramount issues this band is titled BARREL HOUSE FIVE (i.e., three words). **BARRELHOUSE PETE** - this is actually Art Gillham, see Record Research 49 for a full discography. **54 BERLYN BAYLOR ORCH** - in addition to the re-write in the Index the following should be noted: instrumentation is cnt, tbn, clt, pno, gtr, dms and Champion 15477 is as VICKSBURG TEN. **BAY STATE BROADCASTERS** - 3912 is take C on Van Dyke and Goodson and the latter is as BAY STATE SYNCOPATORS as well as the Radiex. **55 BIX BEIDERBECKE** - 12141 not on HRS 23 (this is a Wolverines side), 57 September 8, 1930, re. pianist Frank Signorelli claims to have made this session. **GEORGE BELSHAW** - takes are both A, non-vocal takes were also made and may have been issued on German Brunswick. **62 BEN BERNIE** - E-19804 recorded July 19, 1926, E-20055 recorded September 7, 1926, amend March 15 to March 14, 1927, and mx E-21874 should be E-21865, mx E-22308 should be substituted for E-22310 and date is April 8, E-24473 recorded September 20, E-25130 November 10, E-28418 vocal trio is labelled "Ben Bernie's Speed Boys" on 3896 and this is also Duophone D4033 as THE MANHATTAN SERENADERS, E-28811 should be E-28881, **63 Dick Stabile** joined Bernie on May 11, 1929, so should not be in this personnel and he said that Paul Weigan was not in the band when he joined. E-29005 date more likely December, 1928, and unknown vocalist is Eddy Thomas, E-29338 vocalist is Scrappy Lambert as is that on E-29557 for which a likelier date is March, 1929. **64 HARRY BIDGOOD AND SAM BOGEN** - C-155-E also Guardsman 2032 as ART AND LESLIE YOUNG. **BIG ACES** - R365 is also as BIG CHOCOLATE DANDIES. **65 add BIRMINGHAM RED JACKETS** - pseudonym on Buddy for Vagabonds, q.v. **67 BLACK DOMINOES** - sides on Gennett 5347 have unknown alto added to instrumentation, 8679 take A also issued. **BLACK PIRATES** - add 20822-2 "Some Of These Days" Buy 1218 and 1347 recorded c. August, 1928, and (unknown mx) "Just A Sweetheart" Buy 1218. **68 EUBIE BLAKE** - 1234-4 Buy 1448 as

JOHN MARTIN & HIS ORCH, 1295-1 also Buy 1460 as JOHN MARTIN & HIS ORCH, Varsity 8046 as DICK ROBERTSON & HIS ORCH, Varsity 5056 as DICK ROBERTSON & HIS ORCH. **68 BLIND PERCY**—this is labelled BLIND PERCY AND HIS BLIND BAND and mxs are 20138-2 (c. October, 1927) "Coal River Blues" and 20180-2 "Fourteenth Street Blues" (c. November, 1927). **69 BOB OR BUD BLUE**—the Imperial "Lovable And Sweet" has a complicated discographical history! Most if not all issued versions are by a Sam Lamin band though no issue known bears his name. The performance is lively dance music with one chorus divided into solos by clarinet (probably Larry Abbott) and trombone (Tom Dorsey). Mx is 8921 recorded August 27, 1929. Banner 6483 as CAMPUS BOYS, Regal 8831 as ?, Oriole 1668 and Jewel 5685 as UNIVERSITY BOYS, Domino 4386 as ROUNDERS, Imperial 2172 as BUDDY BLUE AND HIS TEXANS, Cameo 9266 and Romeo 1058 as BUDDY FIELDS AND HIS ORCH, Perfect 15213 and Pathe 37032 as BEN FRANKLIN HOTEL DANCE ORCH—with a variety of matrix and control numbers. **70 JIMMY BLYTHE**—1750 take 2 also issued, 1751 take 2 also issued and Paramount 12207 is labelled JAMES BLYTHE as is (71) 12304, 2420 take 1 also issued and on Silvertone—this tune is labelled "Pump Tille", Paramount 12370 is as JIMMIE BLYTHE and add the ditto mark for 1026, Paramount 12368 is as BLYTHE'S WASHBOARD BAND (i.e., no Jimmy) and 2542 title is "Buddy Burtons Jazz" (i.e., no apostrophe) and this has a vocal (2541-1 being instrumental), Paramount 12376 is as JIMMIE BLYTHE AND HIS RAGMUFFINS (not Jimmy and not Ragamuffins) and 2603-1 Century catalogue no. is 3029 (not 3009), **72** Gennett 6502 as BLYTHE AND BURTON, March 20, 1931, in Gennett ledger James Clark is listed as Charlie Clark. **BOHEMIAN BAND**—Metropole 1258 is as BOHEMIAN DANCE BAND. **CHARLES**



BOOKER—Oriole 347 as Booker's Dixie Jazz Band, Gennett 6375 is listed in ledger as "Old Time Orch Play" which may indicate that these are "Country And Western" rather than jazz or blues performances. **73 PERRY BRADFORD**—1429/1430 11283 issue also on Broadway label, February, 1924, includes Otto Hardwicke (alt). **76 BROADWAY BROADCASTERS**—2357 take A also issued, Perfect 15126 and Pathe 36945 bear mx 108640-1, 2 with higher takes a different version of this tune, **77** 3128 also Romeo 649 and May, 1928, seems a better date for this session, all these are probably Sam Lamin-directed bands as may be the Brunswicks. **BROADWAY MELODY MAKERS**—add Puretone 11284 "Two Time Dan" (Original Indiana Five)/"Wild Papa" (Original Georgia Five) both q.v. **78 BROADWAY SYNCOPATORS**—10464 also Aco G15163 as OHIO DANCE BAND. **79 HARVEY BROOKS' QUALITY FOUR**—Leon Herriford and Henry "Tincan" Allen. add **BROWN & TERRY'S JAZZOLA BOYS** unknown tpt, tbn, clt, pno, bbs, dms, c. June 1921, 7980-A "Darktown Strutters Ball" OK 8006, 7982-A "The Hesitatin' Blues" OK 8006, 7983-A "Saxophone Blues" OK 8017, (mx unknown) "All By Myself" OK 8014, (mx unknown) "Anna In Indiana" OK 8014—c. September 1921, 70185-B "Yelping Hound Blues" OK 8018, 70188-B "Down By The Old Swimmin' Hole" OK 8017, 70190-B "Aunt Hagar's Blues" OK 8018, (mx unknown) "Jump Steady Blues" OK 8021. **80 MERRITT BRUNIES**—613/614 on Autograph 614 according to an Autograph sleeve, **81** another title, if it exists, probably belongs to this March 2, 1926, session and reputedly was issued on German Odeon 03301 and 60233, "Forever With You". **CLIFF BRYAN**—also a pseudonym for The Travelers, q.v. **82 BUFFALODIANS**—unknown vocalist is Harold Arlen, 6648 take 2 also issued, Banner 1776 is take 2 and also has mx 6381-2 in its wax! 6648 also National Music Lovers 1178 (take 2) as MASTER MELODY MAKERS, 6649-3 also

RECORDS

by Charles LaMoore



Apex 8525 as YANKEE SIX ORCH, both *Usiba* issues as LONDONSKIEJ-PICCADILLI-JAZZ.

CHICK BULLOCK—9367 also *Perfect* 12594, *Regal* 8955, *Romeo* 1266 from unknown takes, 9374 take 3 also issued, also *Romeo* 1266 (take 3), 19769-2 also *Banner* 32252, *Canadian Domino* 51904, 19770 also *Banner* 32252.

FRANK BUNCH—*Champion* 15398 as NEW ORLEANS STRUTTERS. **83 WILLIAM E "BUDDY" BURTON**—see also *Blues & Gospel Records* page 100. **84 EZRA BUZZINGTON**

—add BUZZINGTON'S RUBE BAND, c. July, 1925, 12289-A "Brown Jug Blues"/12290-A "Back To That Dear Old Farm" *Gennett* 20124. In addition to the re-write in the Index, note that *Champion* 15581 is as JOSH SIMPKINS AND HIS RUBE BAND.



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In a domain where rights are fuzzy, an open invitation exists for commercial entrepreneurs to enter the blues reissue field with little apparent knowledge or interest in blues (i.e., the haphazard series on *Historical Records*). Therefore, when another U.S. reissue company comes on the scene, this in itself is not exciting. But when this company begins by reissuing the best available country blues (in a tradition established by *Origin Jazz Library*), the results are of major interest to blues collectors.

They issued their first five records under the "Belzona" label, then changed their name to "Yazoo" for the next five reissues. As to the first five (Belzona): *The Mississippi Blues* (L-1001) is a collection of Delta blues which not only presents further sides by acknowledged greats Charlie Patton, Son House, and Robert Johnson, but spotlights Delta guitar styles by such as Mattie Delaney and the dynamic contre-puncted guitar duet on William Harris' impassioned "I'm Leavin' Town".

Belzona's Memphis LP (L-1002) offers obscure yet outstanding performances on each track. The fact that Memphis style has more ragtime in it than Mississippi style is demonstrated here by such as George Torey, Tom Dickson, and, of course, Memphis Minnie. Also featured are some of the best recorded efforts by Furry Lewis, Frank Stokes, and Robert Wilkins. Surprise of this album: the great Allen Shaw—his rough, rough voice (backed by open G bottleneck guitar) has the authority that comes from a lot of living and good whiskey drinking.

In their St. Louis album (L-1003), Belzona give country blues fans a chance to hear long-neglected Charley Jordan at his best—plus two unheard cuts by one of the most exciting of all country performers, Hi Henry Braun. Henry Spaulding's guitar and voice on *Cairo Blues* achieves a delicacy almost unique in country blues.

Tex-Arkana-Louisiana Country (L-1004), another Belzona anthology, features carefully selected Texas guitarists, such as Little Hat Jones, a superb fingerpicker who favored the key of C, Willie Reed, with his infectious sense of rhythm, Blind Lemon Jefferson, in his only recorded example of country ragtime, Sammy Hill's volatile tenor backed by guitar duet, and King Solomon Hill playing his hard, brusque knife guitar. Surprise of this album: Buddy Boy Hawkins—his throaty voice and guitar are so close, they both sound as if they were in open G tuning.

The fifth Belzona LP, *Blind Willie McTell* (L-1005), features McTell as a young man in his musical prime. He was never to recapture it again. After this album, there can be no doubt of McTell as a major 12-string guitar stylist.

HERWIN

PART 2

by **JOHN
MacKENZIE**

In the first issue John MacKenzie listed and described the known Herwins in the 92000 and 93000 series (pressed and labeled by either Gennett or Paramount) and the obscure 'popular' Herwin 55000 series. We also read the history of Herwin—its beginnings as the Arto-phone Corporation in 1918 under the Schiele Brothers through its merger with the St. Louis Music Company and the Laver Brothers in 1925 as a mail order company to its demise in 1930. Here, then, is the initial listing of the little-known 'hillbilly' Herwin 75000 series (pressed and labeled by Gennett, Paramount, and a third, unknown company):

75500 SERIES: HILLBILLY AND SACRED RECORDS

75501 (A) *Blue Ridge Mountain Blues* (775:6124)—VERNON DALHART; (B) *The Lightening (sic) Express* (2176-1)—GUY PHILLIPS: Label Type ?

75501 (A) *The Lightning Express* (9702A)—VERNON DALHART; (B) *Blue Ridge Mountain Blues* (9703A)—SAME: Label Type A-1: Both sides also on Ge 3129 and Silv 3129; (A) side also on Ch 15017, Chlg 165, and Chlg 320; (B) side also on Chlg 164 and Chlg 314.

75502 (A) *The Death of Floyd Collins* (9854A)—VERNON DALHART; (B) *The Dream of the Miners Child* (9853A)—SAME: Label Type A-1: Both sides also on Ge 3197; (A) side also on Chlg 160, Chlg 315, Chlg 318, and Ch 15048; (B) side also on Chlg 505.

75503 (A) *In the Baggage Coach Ahead* (9365A)—VERNON DALHART; (B) *The Wreck of the Old Southern '97* (9617)—SAME: Label Type A-1: (A) side also on Ge 5675, Ge 3019, Chlg 162, Ch 15155, & Chlg 311; (B) side also on Ch 15121, Chlg 161, and Chlg 320. NOTE 1: Later pressings of Ge 5588 and Ge 3019 may use master 9617, rather than the master that had originally been used, namely 9149. No. 9149 bears the slightly altered title, "The Wreck of the Southern Old '97". NOTE 2: "The Wreck of the Old Southern '97" was again remade in 1928 with Master GEX 1254A. Thus, pressings of Ch 15121 made after July 13, 1928, contain the later master. It may also be that pressings of Chlg 161 and Chlg 320 made after this date contain the later master.

75504 (A) *Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane* (12105)—DAVID MILLER; (B) *I Wish I Was A Single Girl Again* (9669)—VERNON DALHART: Label Type A-1: (A) side also on Ge 3062, and on Chlg 331 as by KENNETH BORTON, and on Silv 4019 as by JOHN FERGUS (or FERGUSON); (B) side also on Ge 3107 and Ch 15035.

75505 (A) *Sospiri E Baci* (9376A)—???; (B) *The Prisoner's Song* (9147)—VERNON DALHART: Label Type A-1: (A) side also on Ge 5678 as by I. SUONATORI AMBULANTE; (B) side also on Ge 3030, Silv 3030, Chlg 319, Ch 15073, Ge 5588, and Chlg 163.

75506 (A) *The Little Rosewood Casket* (9616)—VERNON DALHART; (B) *The New River Train* (9615)—SAME: Label Type A-1: Both sides also on Ge 3084 and Silv 3084; (A) side also on Ch 20323, Chlg 164, and Chlg 322; (B) side also on Chlg 165 and Chlg 321.

75507 (A) *Jesse James* (9717A)—VERNON DALHART; (B) *Just Tell Them That You Saw Me* (9716)—SAME: Label Type A-1: Both sides also on Ge 3143 and Silv 4012; (A) side also on Chlg 503; (B) side also on Ch 20323, Chlg 167, and Chlg 310.

75508 (A) *Drowsy Waters* (778:6080)—FRANK FERRA (sic)—JOHN PAOLUKI; (B) *St. Louis Blues* (227:545-2)—CHICAGO DE LUXE ORCHESTRA: Label Type C: (A) side also on Silv 6070 as by FERERA AND PAOLUKI (or PAOLUHI); (B) side also on Para 20341, and on Silv 3526 as by THE RED HOTTERS.

75508 (A) UNKNOWN; (B) *St. Louis Blues* (9647)—FERERA AND PAALUKI: Label Type ???; (B) side on Ge 3101.

75509 (A) *In the Heart of Hawaii* (9394)—???; (B) *Silver Sands of Waikiki* (9395A)—???; Label Type ???; Both sides also on Ge 5699 and Ge 3024 as by W.P. PATTERSON & M.L. ROMANO.

75510—UNKNOWN

75511 (A) *Mother and Home* (9473A)—VERNON DALHART; (B) *The Runaway Train* (9474A)—SAME: Label Type A-1: Both sides also on Ge 3051 and Silv 4018; (B) side also on Ch 15017, Chlg 311; (A) side also on Chlg 163.



75512 (A) *The Church in the Wild Wood* (7908b)—RODEHEAVER & QUARTETTE; (B) *Mother's Prayers Have Followed Me* (7890a)—HOMER RODEHEAVER: Label Type A-1: (A) side also on Ge 4916 and Silv 4916 as by RODEHEAVER AND CRITERION QUARTETTE; (B) side also on Ge 4915 and Silv 4915.

75513—UNKNOWN

75514—UNKNOWN

75515—UNKNOWN

75516 (A) *Behind Those Gray Walls* (9897B)—VERNON DALHART; (B) *The Letter Edged In Black* (9898A)—SAME: Label Type A-1: Both sides also on Ge 3222; (A) side also on Silv 3856, and Chlg 502; (B) side also on Chlg 160, and Chlg 319.

75517 (A) *The Unknown Soldiers Grave* (9896)—VERNON DALHART; (B) *Life of Tom Watson* (9947)—SAME: Label Type A-1: (A) side also on Ge 3258, Silv 3856, Chlg 323, Chlg 157, and Ch 15073; (B) side also on Ge 3238, Silv 3856, and Chlg 505.

75518 (A) *The Great Titanic* (X111)—VERNON DALHART; (B) *The Ship That Never Returned* (X112A)—SAME: Label Type A-1: Both sides also on Ge 3311 and Silv 3828; (A) side also on Chlg 156, Chlg 315, and Chlg 318; (B) side also on Ch 15121, Chlg 155, and Chlg 317. NOTE: (B) side was remade in 1928 with master no. GEX 1278A. Thus, pressings of Ch 15121 made after July 13, 1928, were made using this later master. Whether or not additional pressings of the other records of this tune made after July 13, 1928, also carried this later master is still subject to proof.

75519—UNKNOWN

75520—UNKNOWN

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: Herwin 75500 Series—Part 3!



Label Type: A-1

A recollection of Big Joe's...

by PETE KAUFMAN

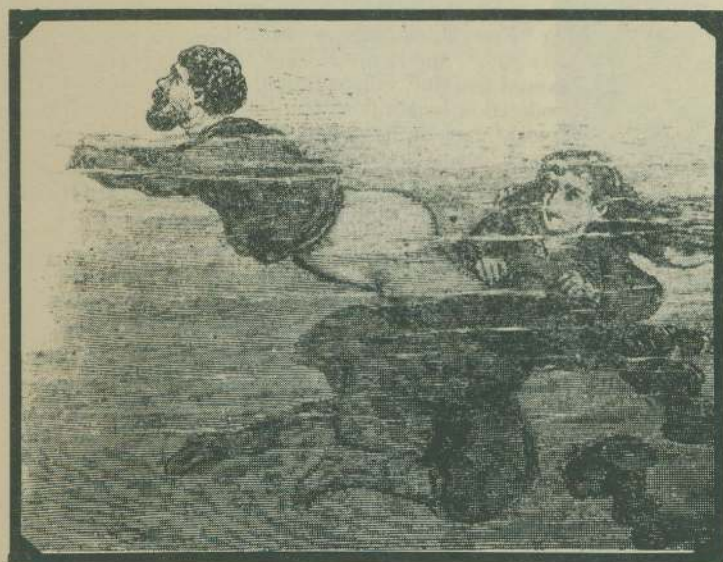
A few years on either side of 1950 mark the prime of my record collecting career, and it was during that time, about the year 1950, that I spent many pleasant Saturday afternoons at Big Joe's record store. Blues collector Henry Renard worked for Big Joe on Saturday afternoons at that time, as an alternative to his task of cataloging Jacob Schneider's records on other days of the week. With Henry as possible catalyst, it became the habit of other blues collectors in the area—James McKune, Ron Lubin and myself—to drop in on Big Joe's on Saturday afternoon, a habit that persisted with unvarying regularity for a number of months. Our coterie was augmented by a number of other aficionados of Big Joe's including Sol Gritz—at the time putting out excellent reissues on Creole label—and psychology student Lou Levy (not as avid a record collector as the rest of us, but undoubtedly putting the afternoons to good use through the double accomplishment of discussing jazz matters and possibly engaging in an on-the-spot psychological field study).

The place was usually well packed those Saturday afternoons, and prominent among the crowd were a couple of Big Joe's cronies. One of them was often found lying on the floor, and it was necessary to step over him in order to get from one batch of records to another. He was known simply as Horizontal Abe. Joe's other pal, known to us as the Greek Sea Captain, was a grizzled old man who occasionally brought Big Joe a hamburger from the street below. (To my knowledge

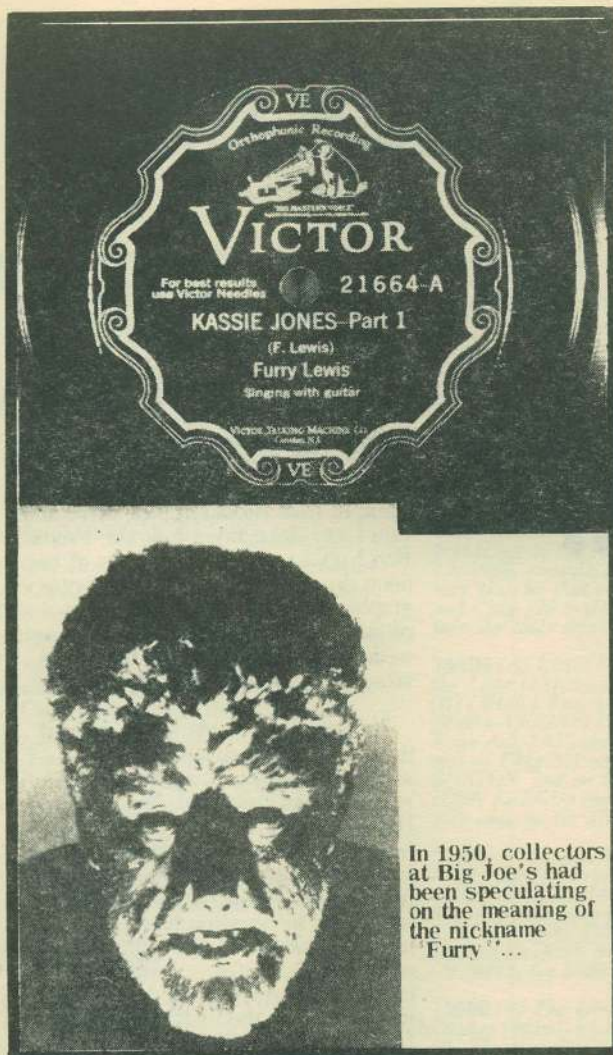
no one ever saw Big Joe set foot outside the store in all the years we knew him.) The Greek Sea Captain could sometimes be observed taking a bath in a small bathtub adjoining the store.

At this time I was associated with a liquor store, and Big Joe had a standing order with me to bring a half gallon of Gallo muscatel to the record store every Saturday afternoon, which supplemented the hamburgers brought in by the Greek Sea Captain. We all arrived from various parts of the city, Jim McKune came in from Brooklyn, Sol Gritz and Lou Levy descended from the Bronx, Ron Lubin arrived later in the afternoon driving the truck of the photographic company he worked for, often fresh from a Saturday afternoon wedding, and I came from the liquor store with a half gallon of muscatel.

We paced about the store, played records, discussed a variety of subjects, and took care to avoid stepping on Horizontal Abe, while Big Joe dozed intermittently at his large desk in the back of the store. In recalling scraps of conversation from those days, I can readily see how much information has been uncovered since then in the field of our particular interest. Today, collectors know a great deal about the blues men they admire, ranging from the particular type of heart ailment that felled Charley Patton to the brand name of the guitar played by a favored artist. In those



The Greek Sea Captain was he put out to sea once too often?



days we knew none of this. I remember one Saturday afternoon, when speculation centered on Furry Lewis, Jim McKune putting forth the apparently valid assumption that "Furry Lewis was probably a hairy guy." And Henry Renard, who savored fanciful contemplation, wondered at length how Mrs. Crockett cooked the dinner when David Crockett took the stove pipe off to the recording studio. Our knowledge of particulars was limited.

Big Joe tolerated these Saturday afternoon gatherings amicably. With one exception that I remember. One afternoon, Big Joe, without any preamble or apparent motivation, suddenly picked up Sol Gritz and heaved him down the flight of stairs leading to the street. Joe then returned to his nap, and no explanation of this forceful display of irritation was ever forthcoming. As I say, this was an exceptional occurrence, as Joe was generally pleased to have us gather there. Occasionally though, potential customers aroused Joe's suspicion or displeasure. Illustrative of this was an occurrence on an afternoon

amidst the usual Saturday crowd discoursing noisily on various topics were two young teenagers quietly searching through the record bins, to all intents and appearances the only prospective customers in the place. Joe suddenly confronted them, and demanded to know what they wanted. Joe's appearance at such moments was formidable, and enough to awe any sensible persons (as these two youngsters proved to be) into fearful retreat from the store.

There was, however, some basis for an occasional display of suspicion on Joe's part. A certain amount of record pilferage was taking place. And on one Saturday afternoon we decided to move Big Joe's huge desk from the back of the store to the front of the store, directly by the entrance door, as a measure to prevent a continuation of the pilferage. With the desk thus located, it was impossible for anyone to come and go without passing directly in front of Big Joe. But the occasional thefts continued. For now, instead of dozing in the back of the store, Joe sat at his desk slumbering in the front of the store, nullifying to a great extent the purpose of the change.

For some reason the penny compartment of Joe's cash register was often filled to overflowing. The pennies would spill over into the other compartments which scarcely held any coins at all. Thus, making a sale sometimes created problems, in that it was difficult to make the correct amount of change.

Precisely at three O'clock each Saturday afternoon a man named Bob appeared at Big Joe's with a suitcase full of dirty books. These received our proper attention, some were purchased if the action was deemed graphic enough, whereas Bob was mildly chastised if the depictions did not achieve the epic proportions one rightfully expected of such material.

If some of the above paragraphs seem to be poking fun at Big Joe's, in closing I would like to properly balance the picture by stating that I will always remember Joe as one of the nicest guys I have known. His store is now closed, and the building is about to be demolished to make way for new construction. The Jazz Record Center (the actual name of Big Joe's store), with its notable motto "Everything From Bunk To Monk," a dingy and unprepossessing store up one flight of stairs on a sleazy block, is recalled by me with fond appreciation.



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